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The Shrine of Our Lady of VAILANKANNI.

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THE SHRINE OF OUR LADY

OF

VAILANKANNI

BY

Rev. Fr. S. R. SANTOS.

OFFICE OF THE REGISTRAR OF BOOKS
11 JAN 1934
MADRAS

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"In accordance with the decrees of Pope Urban VIII, we declare that the supernatural occurrences related in this book, and which have not been examined and recognized by the Holy See, have only the authority of tradition and legend. When using the words graces, miracles, favours, we only follow the common form of speech in use among the faithful and do not presume in any way to forestall the judgment of the Church whose exclusive right it is to award to these names their proper, real, and full meaning."

Nihil Obstat.

M. MOTHA VAZ,

Censor deputatus,

Tanjore 22nd Aug. 1933.

Imprimi Potest.

F. H. FRANCO,

Administrator Apostolic,

Diocese of Mylapor3.

San Thome,

24th August, 1933,

INTRODUCTION.

ON PILGRIMAGES

A Natural Instinct.

THE custom of making pilgrimages is a very ancient one and its antiquity is explained by the fact that it takes its origin in a natural instinct of the human heart. Man likes the definite, the concrete, the local. Though he has no lasting city here, yet he learns to love well his temporary earthly abode, and especially the places in it that are associated with the joys or sorrows of his youth or with the scenes of the birth or achievements of the great among his fellows. There rises to the mind the picture of Mount Vernon, of the tomb at Springfied, of the meadows, church and cottage at Statford-on-Avon, together with the old house whose walls gave back our childish prattle and the loved tones of voices that are now stilled forever. If such is man's attachment to places of purely human interest, it is not surprising that he should revere and seek out spots made holy by the visitation and indwelling of God or of God's great servants, holy men and women.

Not Peculiar to Christianity.

Nor is the custom of pilgrimages peculiar to Christianity; the same natural instinct found expression in all religions. Over many a sandy plain the ancient Egyptians trudged to the oracle at Thebes; the swarthy Greeks journeyed to hearken for Apollo's counsel at Delphi; the Mexican Indians went in reverential processions to the

huge temple of Quetzal. Naturally, religions which have a chief outstanding figure, either god or prophet, would be most famous for this devotion. Thus Buddhism and Mohammedanism have their noted shrines to which their religionists make pious visitations. Kapilavastu, Benares and Kasinagara, scenes of the birth, activity and death of Buddha are annually the objectives of vast throngs :. and Mecca of Mohammed scarcely needs a reference.

From the definite, local setting of theophanies, pilgrimages follow inevitably as the expression of a natural instinct. Hence it is not to be wondered at that the Church, with its sympathetic appreciation of human nature and its prompting, should encourage from the very earliest days of Christianity the devotion of pilgrimages. "The Word was made flesh and dwelt amongst us," and because of this Incarnation Bethlehem and Nazareth and Jerusalem have an endearment in the hearts of men that will last to the end of time. And not only the places made sacred by the life and death of the Master were venerated, but, by an extension of idea, the scenes of the acts of the Saints came to be held in deep religious reverence. Thus Rome, Lourdes, and Lisieux are closely associated in the minds of Catholics with the Holy Places of Judea when they are checking off objectives on their proposed devout itineraries.

Antiquity of Christian Pilgrimages

An interesting letter dating from about the end of the fourth century attests to the antiquity of Christian

pilgrimages. Saints Paula and Eustochium wrote to their friend, the Roman matron Marcella telling her of the universality of the holy custom and urging her to join them on a trip to the Holy Places. They write: "Whosoever is noblest in Gaul comes hither. And Britain though divided from us yet hastens from her land of sunset to these shrines known to her only through the Scriptures." The Saints then go on to say that the custom dates from Apostolic days. They maintain that from the very Ascension of Christ there had been a constantly recurring procession of all classes of the Faithful to the spots in Judea made holy by the presence of Christ. That such a continuity of practice from apostolic times down to the end of the fourth century actually existed cannot be proved with historical accuracy. There are, however, authentic references to pilgrimages which took place very early in the third and again early in the fourth century and in none of these accounts is there any indication that the devotion was an innovation. So it may be granted, therefore, that pilgrimages enjoy an antiquity, amounting almost to apostolic origin, in Christian practice.

Next in importance to the Holy Land as a centre of pilgrimages, both historically and from a devotional point of view comes Rome. From the earliest days pilgrims wended their way Romewards to do homage at the tombs of the Primate, Peter and the great Apostle, Paul. At the beginning of this present Holy Year, Pius XI descended in pilgrimage to the crypt where lie the remains of the first in the long line of his predecessors. And the

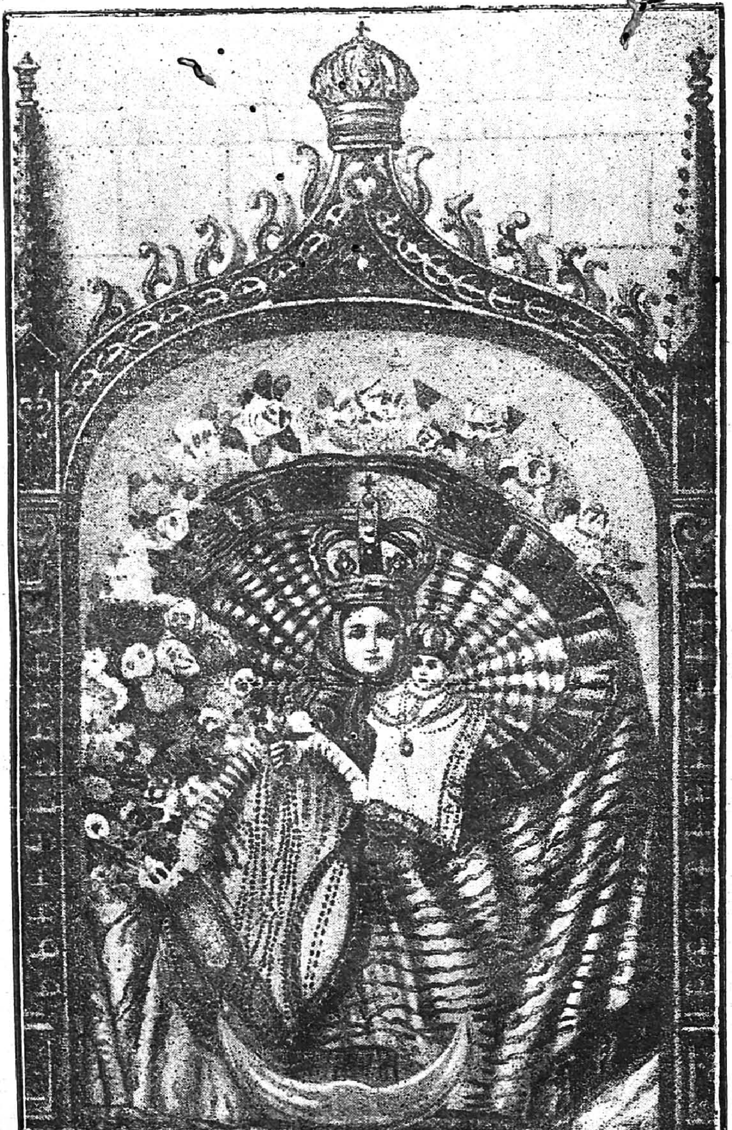
Holy Father would have all join him in his devotions. He bids those who have it within their power to repair to the central shrine this year to honour the Fisherman and to garner the rich spiritual blessings which Mother Church proffers to the Faithful in their time of special need.

Long ago the great St. John Chrysostom left on record the burning desire he felt of making a pilgrimage to Rome. Chrysostom was an ardent admirer of St. Paul and it is the latter's tomb rather than Peter's that he centres upon in his yearnings. Writes Chrysostom: "If I were freed from my labours and my body were in sound health, I would eagerly make a pilgrimage merely to see the chains that had held him captive and the prison where he lay." Modern Bishops will agree, this year of pilgrimage, with their sainted brother in wishing that they too might visit the capital of the Christian world, there to pray at the tombs of the twin prince Apostles.

In former days our newer and more western land of the sunset had worthy representation in the great pilgrimages. Americans were no strangers in the throngs that visited the Holy Land, Rome, Lourdes, and the other Old World shrines. Unfortunately, many of them will now have to say, in a paraphrase of Chrysostom's words. "If I were freed from my labours and my exchequer permitted, I would eagerly make a pilgrimage to Rome." But the custom will not die out. Pilgrimages have survived even sorer trials than our latter-day economic collapse. They lived through the pre-Reformation abuses which sprang up to mar the goodness of their

purpose, they survived the bitter and often unreasonable opposition of the Reformers. What is rooted in an instinct of human nature will not be easily exterminated nor long lie dormant.

THOMAS J. LYNAM, S. I., IN "AMERICA."



The Miraculous Image of Our Lady on the High Altar VAILANKANNI.

11 JAN 1934
MADRAS

THE SANCTUARY OF OUR LADY OF VAILANKANNI.

Topography.

VAILANKANNI, also written Velangany, is an insignificant village, situated six miles south of Negapatam, in the District of Tanjore, Madras Presidency. It is sorrounded by water on three sides—on the west by the Vedarniam Canal, on the south by the Velliar river and on the east by the Bay of Bengal. Its population is about 3000. It has a police sub-station and two private markets. Every Tuesday there is a *shandy*, where the people of the surrounding villages find sales for their wares and produce and an opportunity to purchase the necessaries of life. From Negapatam the village is reached by four ways—on foot along the beach, and by boat along the Canal; the other two are by road, one for the greater part along the Tiruturaipundi road, close to the canal; the other across the villages West and South Poyur, by the side of Uthiriamatha tope. The shortest way is by the beach, about 4½ miles; next comes the road through the village, which is shorter than the Tiruturaipundi road which is about 6 miles; finally by country boat along the canal, which is the longest and slowest, but surely the most pleasant. On the roads leading to Vailankanni one will observe streams of bullock carts carrying loads of pilgrims. In recent years modern ways of transport have come in vogue. Thus a number

of buses ply between Negapatam and Vailankanni. But whatever conveyance the pilgrim takes, he must be prepared for a good deal of jolting, as the latter part of the road, nearing Vailankanni, is little better than a mud road. The most interesting is the coming of the pilgrims along the sea beach route. It is edifying to see thousands of people making it a part of their pilgrimage to walk the distance by way of penance. On reaching Vailankanni, one first meets the Hindu quarters, a small Hindu temple with a cluster of houses on either side of the road. Here are the ryots of the place. As for the Christian part of the village, a Hindu visitor records the follcwing impression, which is an exact though a brief description. "The Christian part of the village extends about half a mile further east (from the Hindu quarters), and is not very impressive in appearance. It is a straggling collection of huts and the visitor is generally disappointed till he reaches the Church which is built close to the beach. The river Vellayar runs close to the church on the south side. The church and the connected buildings cover an extent of about two acres and have a pretty appearance, looking from the north. The deep background of the cocoanut trees and the white sand of the beach make the picture pleasing to the eye and elevating to the soul of the religiously inclined tourist."

The Sanctuary.

The church faces the east and the sea. It has an imposing facade with two lofty spires, pointing heavenwards like two angel fingers. Another striking feature

is the new dome which brings together the four wings which give the Sanctuary the appearance of a large cross. Like pious pilgrims we join the crowd at the main door. We walk up the long nave and find-ourselves before the great centre of attraction—*the miraculous statue of Our Lady of Health, with the Infant Jesus in her arms.* It rests in an ancient niche at the high altar which is at the transept. The background is in-set with antique porcelain plates illustrating scenes from the Old and New Testament. The high altar—Our Lady's Altar—is provided with a sanctuary proper which is quite spacious, and is enclosed on three sides with fancy rails. Over head there is the dome provided with several sky lights which overflood the church with subdued colour—a happy device very conducive to prayer. The whole church is paved with black and white marble slabs. Within and without the church, the pilgrims swarm like bees round a busy bee-hive on a spring day. They hail from all over India, Burmah and Ceylon; and during the annual feast of the 8th September have been estimated to number more than half a lac. They ask one another—" What is the origin of this magnificent Shrine reared up here in the desert, cut off from the busy world? " Neither priest nor pilgrim can supply an adequate reply. The fact is that the origin of the Shrine remains obscure so far as historical data are concerned. All that we can now ascertain about it is that it is the joint contribution of three agencies: two innocent children of Vailankanni itself, two gentlemen from Negapatam and a score of Portuguese sailors of old—one and all inspired, if not let personally, by the Blessed Virgin herself, to whom the Sanctuary is

dedicated. If you want to know more about it you must fall back upon tradition which is the distant echo of what is no more.

The First Chapel at Vailankanni.

Local tradition traces the present miraculous statue of Our Lady of Health of Vailankanni to a thatched chapel that is said to have come into existence in an extraordinary manner. Somewhere in the XVI or the XVII century there lived at Vailankanni village a poor widow with an only son who was lame from birth. In order to eke out a living, the poor widow would daily place the crippled boy in charge of a little stall sheltered from the burning sun by the out-stretched branches of a banyan tree which stood outside the village on a somewhat higher level than the surrounding ground. For this reason the place was called Nadu-thittu.

Our little shop-keeper specialised in fresh butter-milk the supply of which was frequently renewed by the industrious mother. Day in and day out he kept at his post. The hotter the sun the more appetising became his fresh butter-milk. On a very hot day, when the poor lad was sitting under the tree as usual, on the look out for some chance customer, he found himself all of a sudden visited by a Woman of peerless beauty, holding a still more beautifull Child in her arms, both attired in spotless garments. The Lady approached nearer, smiled at the poor cripple and asked him for a cup of butter-milk to quench

the thirst of her Child. No time was lost in bargaining about the price she was prepared to pay; the little lame boy felt quite happy to be privileged to oblige such distinguished customers. But there was a painful hesitation, almost amounting to a refusal, when the Lady asked the lad to go to Negapatam and apprise a certain catholic gentleman of their presence at Vailankanni. With an apologising smile he pleaded to be excused on the ground of sheer physical impossibility, he was lame! Then the Lady turned to her child and suggested a good turn. And forthwith, lo! he was made whole. With a buoyant heart, the erstwhile lame boy ran to Negapatam. Once there the Catholic gentleman found no difficulty in believing the truth of his message, having himself had a similar vision of Our Lady in his sleep, the previous night.

Both made for Vailankanni where they were favoured with the same apparition of the Blessed Virgin and the Infant Jesus. The good gentleman was bewildered by this celestial vision, and could find no words to give vent to his feelings. The Blessed Virgin Mary then expressed her desire that a church should be built there in her honour. With the willing co-operation of the people of the locality whose imagination was vividly stirred by the miraculous cure of the well known lame boy, the thatched chapel was soon set up and fitted with an altar whereon they placed a statue of Our Lady with the Infant Jesus in her arms. Soon the news spread all round. Catholics and Non-Christians flocked to the spot. Many were the favours granted to the people who came there to pray, so that the fame of the Shrine spread far

and wide. In view of the striking cure of our lame boy and subsequent cures that took place there, the Mother of God came to be known and invoked as "Our Lady of Health."

Our Lady's Tank.

Another tradition tells us that, at an earlier date, on a very hot day, a little shepherd boy was on his way from Vailankanni to Negapatam, with a pot full of milk for his master. As he passed by the village tank he placed his pot of milk under a banyan tree standing near by and went over to the tank to wash his feet and perhaps to have a dip On his return to the tree and the milk pot, he sat himself down for a while. Soon he fell half-a-sleep only to be startled to his feet by a bright vision of a Beautiful Lady holding a Child in her arms. She was clad in modest but spotless garments. Her face was more serene and majestic than any he had seen before, her Son's was as bright and glorious as the rising sun. Both wore a celestial halo round their heads. Enamoured of the rare sight, the little shepherd boy felt too deeply moved for words. A sense of awe mingled with fear came stealing over him. The Lady, however, re-assured him with a mother's smile, and went so far as to condescend to ask him for some milk for her Child. "How did she know that he was carrying milk in his pot? Could he dispose of his master's milk?" These thoughts troubled the shepherd boy.

But he felt unable to refuse such a gracious Lady her little request; he would explain matters to his master when the time came. So he joyfully gave her the milk. The favour granted, the vision disappeared with lightning speed. The shepherd boy lost no time in running to Negapatam where he reported the whole matter to his master who was a Hindu Vellala. Great, however, was his surprise upon lifting up the lid of the milk pot......it was as full as ever. In spite of it, he insisted, as earnestly as he could, that he had given away a good deal of it to the beautiful Lady. The master found it so strange that he resolved to go down to Vailankanni along with the boy. Once there, by the tank, they were favoured with the same vision...a Lady of unspeakable beauty with a still more beautiful Child in her arms. The Christians of Negapatam on hearing of it said it must have been the Blessed Virgin Mary with the Child Jesus. The tank is now called Our Lady's Tank. This tank is still to be seen, east of the Annapillai Road.

The Sailor's Chapel.

The first chapel built on the present site of the magnificent church of Vailankanni is also ascribed by local tradition to the direct and benevolent intervention of the Blessed Virgin Mary. In the XVII century a Portuguese merchant vessel was sailing from Macao (China) to Colombo, in Ceylon. While crossing the Bay of Bengal it was caught in a terrible storm; the gale grew furious,

the waves lashed high, and its fate with all on board seemed sealed. The helpless sailors threw themselves on their knees with all the fervour of sinking souls and besought the Morning Star to succour them....They vowed to build a church in honour of the Blessed Virgin wherever they could land safe. Their prayer instantly granted, there was a miraculous lull in the cyclone. Not long after the ship weighed anchor at Vailankanni. The first thing the Portuguese crew did, on landing, was to kneel down and express gratefull thanks to heaven. There, on the spot, Our Lady appeared to them and directed their steps to the thatched chapel above spoken of. On their arrival at the chapel they once more fell on their knees before an image of Our Lady with the Child Jesus in her arms, but for whom they might have been at the bottom of the sea.

The zealous clients of Mary soon set about the best way of fulfilling their vow to build Our Lady a permanent chapel. As they were settling about the most suitable place, Our Lady is said to have again appeared to them, and chosen herself the place for the proposed chapel the very spot where it now stands. Without more ado, with their own hands, they set about digging the foundation for a decent church, which might be strong enough to perpetuate their gratitude. From here and there they secured the necessary materials and finally succeeded in building a church measuring 24 ft. by 12. ft. with windows and roof and tower in the usual western style. The construction over, they were at a loss as to whether they should transfer into it the statue in the

thatched chapel, or import a new one from home. But one morning the Portuguese and the Indians saw, to their great wonder, the sacred statue of the primitive chapel transferred to the new chapel's altar. They could never discover who was responsible for the transfer, hence they piously believed that Our Lady had seen to it herself.

The sailors were not satisfied with all they could do for the chapel on the spur of the moment, but they kept up intercourse with Vailankanni; and in their subsequent visits furnished it with many other improvements. Among them may be mentioned the rich porcelain plates illustrating some historical scenes of the Bible which one can still see in great abundance round the high altar. The church was dedicated to the Nativity of Our Lady in order to perpetuate the date of their safe landing at Vailankanni, viz. the 8th September. These details we gather almost verbatim from the *Monograph of Our Lady of Health of Vailankanni* written in 1920, by Very Rev. Fr. Motha Vaz, now Vicar Forane of Tanjore in this Diocese of San Thomé of Mylapore. He professes to have scrupulously obtained them directly from the people of Vailankanni and Negapatam, and the surrounding country parishes with which he is familiar. These details bear the hall mark of simplicity which is akin to truth. Such versions are not uncommon with other ancient and revered Catholic Shrines, the world over. We note that the first two chapters of the Shrine are between Vailankanni and Negapatam. The third does not mention Negapatam. Can we find out why? Did the sailors land and build the

chapel during the Portuguese or Dutch period at Negapatam? We shall see from the following historical sketch of the times.

The Portuguese in the East.

The Portuguese sailors, of Vailankanni fame, followed in the wake of Vasco da Gama who discovered the sea-route to India in 1492. Da Gama came out with the enthusiasm of a Crusader. His flagship displayed Our Lady's flag to the four winds; the swelling sails displayed the red Cross. Lasting monuments to the Cross were raised wherever da Gama landed. He had on board a chaplain to attend to the spiritual needs of the expedition; the chapel was dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary; he christened the flagship *St. Gabriel*, trusting that it would prove, as it did, a messenger of glad tidings to a new world—in a word he initiated and crowned his enterprise with Mass, Holy Communion and a procession from and back to *Sancta Maria de Belem*, in Lisbon, which thus became the golden link between the East and the West. This was the spirit which Dom Vasco da Gama instilled into the Portuguese sea-trade in the East. No wonder then that the Portuguese sailors of the XVI and the XVII centuries should have become the founders and benefactors of so many shrines of Our Lady in Africa, in India and in the Far East, Vailankanni included. Some English writers have actually called the Portuguese better Church than Empire builders. They might be both. Da Gama was followed by Alvares Cabral in 1501. This

second Indian expedition brought eight Franciscan missionaries, who became the pioneers of modern missions in India. "Of the eight Franciscan missionaries Cabral brought out to India," says the author of *Mytras Lusitanas do Oriente* (Vol. III, page 183), "one converted and baptised a rajah or prince of Calicut, another a rajah of Cochin, another the kings of Cannanore and yet another a prince of the royal house of Narsinga (Vijayanagar)." Vailankanni and Negapatam were then within the limits of the Vijayanagar Kingdom. Goa and the West Coast was the Headquarters and the main theatre of Portuguese missionary enterprise in India; nevertheless we find that, in 1523, the Portuguese were already in charge of St. Thomas' Tomb at Mylapore, Madras. They were in Negapatam in 1534 and earlier still in Tuticorin, in South India. By 1606 the missions of the Coromandel Coast had developed enough to warrant the erection of the Diocese of Mylapore. The Bull was signed by H. H. Pope Paul V and the first Bishop of Mylapore was Dom Sebastiao de San Pedro. Towards the end of this sketch the reader will find a full list of the Bishops of Mylapore.

Negapatam.

Negapatam—the name means city of snakes, sacred reptiles much spoken of in Hindu mythology. James Grant, author of Cassell's History of India, ascribes to Negapatam the distinction of possessing a

towering Hindu temple of ancient date which was said to have been built by the devil in a single night.

"Negapatam," we find from *Picturesque India*, "was one of the earliest Portuguese settlements in the Coromandel Coast." *The History of the Catholic Church in India*, by Fr. M. de Sa, tells us that the Portuguese Augustinians were at Negapatam about 1534. The Franciscans were there also from a very early date. We know for certain that St. Francis Xavier was there twice in 1545. Thence he proceeded on foot to St Thomas' Tomb at Mylapore, in a pilgrimage to find out through the intercession of the Apostle of the East whether it was God's will that he (Xavier) should embark for the Far East, to introduce the Gospel into China and Japan of which he had received very hopeful reports through the Western merchants. In this connection he complains in one of his letters that it was a shame for the Christian world to have allowed the merchant to forestall the missionary in the Far East. The Society of Jesus was soon after represented at Negapatam by Fr. Francisco Perez of whom the Saint writes :—"When I consider the abundant harvest a single man is daily reaping for the Catholic Church (Fr. Perez), I feel overwhelmed with confusion and disturbed to the bottom of my soul for my own laxity......Nevertheless what I envy him most is not his zeal for souls but his incomparable humility. As for myself I regard Fr. Francisco Perez as one of the greatest saints the Church possesses to-day. (Letters of St. Francis Xavier, Vol. III, p. 14, quoted by Fr. Jean, S.J., Maduré, Tom. II, part. IV, page 115).

But returning to the subject of the Portuguese regime at Negapatam, the *Monumenta Xaveriana* says: "From Ceylon the Reverend Father (St Francis Xavier) came to Negapatam which at the time was a very small concern, but is now a very rich and noble settlement situated within the dominion of the Rajah of Vijayanagar. It is governed by a Captain who holds office for three years. He has charge of the administration justice and has jurisdiction not only over the Portuguese themselves but also over the Indian Christians, so far as Christian law is concerned." *Monumenta Xaveriana*, Vol. I, page 58.

About Negapatam Fr. Jean, S. J. (l. c.) says: "Negapatam—Elle tomba de bonne heure en pouvoir des Portugais qui en firent un de leur principaux comptoirs sur la Cote Coromandel. Negapatam recut la visite de l' Apotre des Indes; au Nord de la ville a une mille de distance on montre encore le lieu où il s'arrêta. La piété des fideles y a construit un petit sanctuair. La christianté de Negapatam ne cessa de prosperer tant que cette fut sous la domination des Portugais, c'ést-à-dire, pendant plus d'un ciécle."

The quotation covers statements made above and concludes by saying: "The Negapatam christian colony flourished so long as it was under the Portuguese rule, i.e. for over a century."

The Dutch at Negapatam.

The Dutch besieged and captured Negapatam from the Portuguese in 1660. One of their first measures was to expel the Religious Orders above mentioned, the Jesuits, the Franciscans and the Augustinians, although many of their members were not of Portuguese nationality, which may be said in general about the Portuguese missions of the XVI and the XVII centuries when several Religious Orders of several nationalities worked side by side in the same Diocese and even in the same city. We find from a document reproduced below that in 1662 the Franciscan transferred their church from its former site within the Portuguese city, taken by the Dutch, into the present place not far from the railway station. The transfer was carried out by Fr. Francisco do Oriente who became the founder and first parish priest of the present church of the Immaculate Conception, in 1662. Later on this church was also called—Mae-de-Deus.

The Dutch made Negapatam the capital of their Indian colonies. They became at the same time masters of Ceylon. Along with their merchandise the Dutch imported into India and Ceylon the bitter and fierce quarrels they had at the time at home (Holland) against the Catholic Church. In Ceylon they persecuted Portuguese and Indian Catholics alike. Mass was a crime, as we learn from the many narrow escapes of "Venerable" Father Joseph Vaz. The Indian Catholics of Negapatam

could not have fared much better, unless their church and parish of the Immaculate Conception was outside the limits of the Dutch territory, as we suspect, and within the direct jurisdiction of the Indian Rajah of Vijayanagar. To the credit of Negapatam Catholics it must be here recorded that in spite of persecution they preserved the Faith intact, for we find them to be about 4000 strong in 1771 towards the end of the Dutch period when Father Rosario was their parish priest. It would be interesting to know if Vailankanni was in any way affected by Dutch persecution, all the more so as they were specially opposed to devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary, which devotion Protestants of the time called Mariolatry, something worse than idolatry. At any rate the presence of the Dutch at Negapatam, which leads to Vailankanni, (as we have seen at the beginning of this booklet) may account for the little progress made by the Shrine during the Dutch period. With the advent of the British in 1783 Vailankanni begins a new era of prosperity.

List of the Parish Priest of Negapatam, Dutch Period.

(1660 — 1783).

1662	Fr. Francisco de Oriente,	Franciscan Order
1712	Very Rev. Fr. Alexandre de Assumpcao	do
1718	Fr. Jorge da Conceicao	,,
1723	Fr. Joao de S. Antonio	,,
1724	Fr. Antonio de S. Catarina	,,
1728	Fr. Jorge da Conceicao	,,
1728	Fr. Joao de Gloria	,,

1732	Fr. Francisco de Purificacao	Franciscan Order
1732	Fr. Diogo de S. Teresa	,,
1733	Fr. Joze de Espirito Santo (acting)	,,
1733	Fr. Joao de Sto. Antonio (Commissary)	,,
1734	Fr. Luis de S. Antonio	,,
1734	Fr. Manoel de S. Thomas	,,
1735	Fr. Luis de S. Antonio	,,
1735	Fr. Jose Joaquim de Jesus Maria	,,
1744	Fr. Joze de Espirito Santo	,,
1750	Fr. Francisco de S. Joze	,,
1753	Fr. Joze Joaquim de Jesus Maria	,,
1756	Fr. Joze Caetano de S. Diogo	,,
1765	Fr. Amaro de Jesus	,,
1768	Fr. Manoel de S. Joaquim	,,
1769	Fr. Caetano de Assumpcao (Secular Priest)	
1771	Fr. Antonio de Rozario	,,
1780	Fr. Luis dos Remedios	,,
1782—83	Fr. Antonio do Rozario	,,

Vailankanni at Last.

The last parish priest of Negapatam mentioned in the above list is also the first parish priest of Vailankanni as an independant parish, in 1771, as we may see from list of Vailankanni parish priests submitted below. Being specially remarkable on account of its pilgrimages, as it is still to-day, the priest would reside there only during September, the month of the pilgrimage. But how long lasted this period of infancy we do not know. The Monograph of Our Lady of Health of Vailankanni, already

quoted before says :—"The exact date of its establishment cannot however be determined. All that we may surmise is that it must have formed part of the Mission of Negapatam, at least in or about 1660." This must refer to the first thatched chapel at Vailankanni. We have seen at the beginning of this Booklet that the first two apparitions of Our Lady at Vailankanni are both shared between Vailankanni and Negapatam—in either case an innocent child from Vailankauni meets or is told to meet first a Hindu Vellala, then a Christian gentleman from Negapatam; but when the sailors land and remain long enough to raise up a permanent church, no mention is made of Negapatam. Would not the Portuguese sailors get in touch with Negapatam, if the Portuguese were there still? And if they did, would Negapatam Catholics forget their share in the Sailors' Chapel? For the present we must content ourselves with the following authentic document.

" O. M. R. Pe. Me. Secretario passe por certidâo a fùndacao da igreja paroquial da Nossa Senhora da Immaculada Conceicao de Negapatam revendo os Livros desta Provincia. Convento do Espirito Sto. a 8 de Agosto de 1823.

(a) FR. MANOEL DE JESUS MARIA,
Min. Provincial.

Em consequencia da Ordem Supra de N. M. R. Pe. Provincial, revendo os Livros que se acham no Arquivo da Provincia achei no Livro intitulado Paradima a fol.

79 a fundacao da Igreja Paroquial de N. Senhora da Conceicao de Negapatam do theor seguinte—"Na cidade de Negapatam tomadà pelos Hollandeses, no ano de 1662 se transferio o Convento que tinha esta Provincia naquella Cidade, edificado pelo Pe. Francisco do Oriente, na Igreja Paroquial de N. Senhora da Conceicao, que actualmente existe com quasi quatro mill almas, de que é Parcco o Pe. Fr. Antonio do Rozario, filho desta Provincia, o qual tambem admninistra a Hermida ou Hospicio de N. Senhora de Saude, sita na Ponta da Barra do logar de Velangany acima referido" é o que achei, ao qual me reporto. Convento de Espirito Santo, no mesmo dia e era ut supra.

(a) FR. IGNACIO DE SSMA. TRINDADE,

Secretario da Provincia.

Version:—The Very Rev. Father Secretary will pass a certificate of the foundation of the Parochial Church of Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception, at Negapatam, after inspecting the Books of this Province.

(Sd.) FR. MANUEL DE JESUS MARIA,

Provincial of the Friars Minor.

According to the above order of the Very Rev. Father Provincial, I have inspected the Books we have in the Provincial Archives and have found in the Book

called—Paradima—fol. 79, the foundation of the Parochial Church of Negapatam, which is as follows:—"In the city of Negapatam, taken by the Dutch, the Convent (church and residence) Our Order had in that city was transferred to and replaced by the Church of Nossa Senhora de Immaculada Conceicao, built by Fr. Francisco do Oriente. It exists at present with almost four thousand souls. The parish priest is Fr. Antonio do Rozario, of our Order, who administers also the church (Hermida or Hospice) of Our Lady of Health, situated at the Bar, in the place called Velangany," above referred to, this is what I found and do report.

Convento de Espirito Santo, date as above.

(Sd.) FR. IGNACIO DA SSMA. TRINDADE,
Provincial Secretary.

This document was copied from the *Livro das Correspondencias* (Correspondence Book of the Franciscan Missions of Coromandel Coast in 1839, by Fr. Francisco das Dores, Ex-Commissary Provincial of the Franciscans Minor, at the time vicar of Luz (Mylapore) Madras, at the request of Dom Tristao Vaz Teixeira, Bishop Elect and Episcopal Governor of the Diocese of Mylapore. The document was written in order to prove the Franciscan origin and ownership of Negapatam as well as Vailankanni and we need not be surprised it tells us no more. We must look for the Book called *Paradima* in Goa Archives or in Lisbon, if we would go to the source itself for more information. The quotation from *Paradima* is of an earlier date than the covering letter, it

refers to the time when Fr. Antonio de Rozario was Vicar of Negapatam, in 1771. We submit here the list of the Vicars of Vailankanni, since it became an independent parish, in 1771. "The Church of Our Lady of Health of Vellanganny was formerly a filial chapel attached to the church of Negapatam, with a common parish priest for both who belonged to the Franciscan Order of the Friars of the Observance; this mission of Negapatam was divided and provided with two Parish Priests at the time of Fr. Antonio de Rozario." The list of the parish priests of the church of Vellanganny is this:—

1771,	Sept.,	Fr. Antonio do Rozario,	Franciscan.
1774,	Aug.,	Fr. Jose de Santa Roza de Viterbo	,,
1777,	July,	Fr. Antonio do Rozario, Commissary	,,
1779,	Spt,	Fr. Luis dos Remedios,	,,
1783,	Jany.,	Fr. Antonio do Rozario, Commissary	,,
1788,	Dec.,	Fr. Antonio de Jesus Maria Jose	,,
1789,	Sept.,	Fr. Antonio do Rozario, Commissary	,,
1792,	Sept.,	Fr. Jos. S. Roza de Viterbo, Commissary & V. Forane	,,
1814	May,	Fr. Constantino de Jesus Maria, Commissary,	,,
1819	May,	Fr. Thome da Piedade,	,,
1822	Feb.,	Fr. Francisco Xavier Mascarenhas,	,,
1822,	Augt.,	Fr. Francisco das Dores,	,,
1824,	May,	Fr. Felipe de Jesus,	,,
1825,	Sept.,	Fr. Francisco das Dores,	,,
1828,	June,	Fr. Felipe de Jesus,	,,
1829,	May,	Fr. Clemente das Dores,	,,

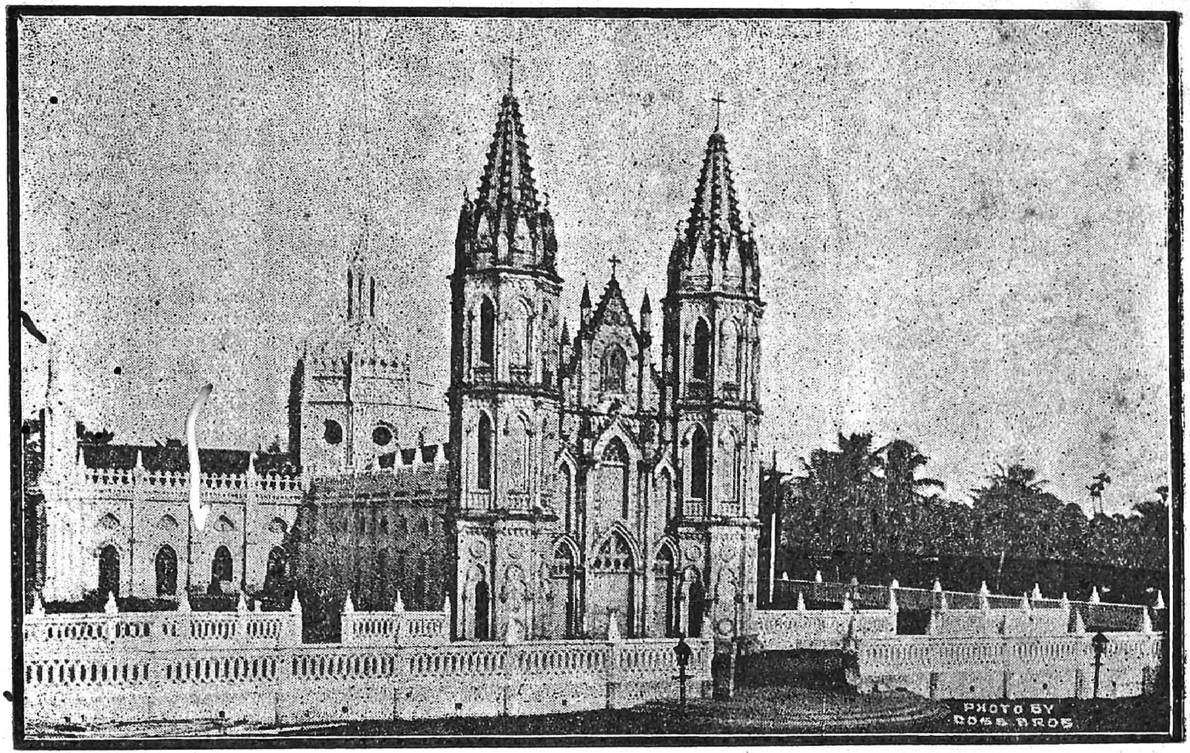
1847, Oct.,	Fr. Isidoro Manuel Allemao, Secular Priest.	
1863, April.,	Fr. Jose Felis Fernandes, Ag. P.P.	,,
1863, Nov.,	Fr. Felipe Nery Joaquim Dias,	,,
1876, May,	Fr. Ignacio Antonio d'Andrade,	,,
1889, Augt.,	Fr. Miguel Francisco Fernandes	,,
1890, Decbr.,	Fr. Joaquim Jose Luis, Ag. P. P.; Vic. Negapatam.	,,
1891, Febr.,	Fr. Guilherme Jose Dias,	,,
1892, Decbr.,	Fr. Joaquim Jose Luis, Ag. P. P.; Vic. Negapatam.	,,
1893, March,	Fr. Martinho Valeriano de Sa,	,,
1899 Sept.,	Fr. Joaquim Francisco da Piedade Dias,	,,
1900, Augt.,	Fr. Camillo Fernandes,	,,
1910, June, up to date,	Fr. Sebastiao Xavier de Noronha,	,,

Taken together the Lists of the Parish Priests of Negapatam and Vailankanni show that the Franciscans of the district of San Thome Diocese and the Province of Goa were in charge of Vailankanni from the beginning up to 1847, when Secular Priests of the Diocese of Mylapore took charge up to the present. The change came about on account of the suppression of the Religious Orders in Portugal and Colonies in 1834, under the baneful influence of Freemasonry. But Vailankanni still treasures the Franciscan spirit which is always at home with the poor, amounting to almost a nuisance during the annual feast of September. The Franciscan origin and ownership of the Shrine is perpetuated by the place of honour given to two Franciscans Saints by the side of the

miraculous image in the High Altar—St. Antony of Lisbon and St. Francis of Assizzi himself. The three Commissaries (District Superiors) mentioned in the list as Parish Priests of Vailankanni point to the importance of the Shrine at the time.

The present Church.

We have already said, that the original Sailors' Chapel was but a tiny one measuring 24 ft. by 12 ft. In course of time, with the improvement of communications by steam-ship, by rail and metalled road, pilgrims flocked to Vailankanni at an ever increasing rate. Consequently the body of the church was enlarged to 70 ft. by 22 ft., without including the ancient little sanctuary and the High Altar which were preserved intact. This enlargement was soon found to be insufficient to meet the increasing demand for more room for pilgrims. There were even some complaints that for want of room people who had come to pray were unable to do so. The ever increasing number of Vailankanni pilgrims was due to a great extent the people's advertisement of the Favours of Our Lady all over India. The numberless poor who came to Vailankanni on foot, returned to their homes singing from door to door and from village to village the Glories and Favours of *Vailankanni Aroquiamada*, very much in the style of the *troubadoures* of the Middle Ages in Europe.



The Church of Our Lady of Health
VAILANKANNI.

On the other hand Anglo-Indians and Indians enjoying railway facilities, or means to procure them, took their own share by publishing from the city house tops the name and fame of Vailankanni. The Press did very little for Vailankanni. By 1920 Vailankanni felt the need of modernising itself, in outward appearance. Not only was the main body of the church again enlarged and the roof raised, but two lofty gothic spires were reared up at the main door or facade, facing the sea. About the same time the surroundings of the church were improved and a very large two storied parochial residence with accommodation for the Offices of the Shrine and for pilgrims was raised up on the river-side, not far from the Church. A few *Chatrams* have since been raised up for some more pilgrims. The remainder, the vast majority, have still to put up with what little accommodation they can get from sheds and tents raised up for the occasion, either by the Parish Priest or by private enterprise.

These last improvements in the church and out-side were introduced by the present Parish Priest, the indefatigable and Very Rev. Fr. Sebastiao Xavier de Noronha. To him we owe also the most recent improvements in the church which raise it to the rank of similar national Shrines in the West.

Besides the spires and the long nave above mentioned the Shrine has now two new wings which meet the High Altar at right angles with the older nave. It has also a large Vestry behind the High Altar, thus completing the

four arms of a Latin Cross. At the centre thereof, right over the miraculous image of Our Lady of Health and the High Altar, there stands an inspiring dome of generous dimensions.

These measurements will give the expert an idea of what the Shrine is now: Length from main door, on the east, to Vestry door, on the west, 182 ft.; from one end of the new wings to the other across the sanctuary, 112 ft.; width of the new wings, sanctuary and Vestry, 24 ft. of the old nave 22 ft. Height of the spires and dome, including the Crosses, 82 ft. and 93 ft. respectively. Style is gothic, but for the dome which nevertheless greatly enhances the beauty of the sanctuary and the altar of Our Lady in the centre, at the transept.

The width of the dome is 24 ft. The dome has eight sky lights. They filter the sun rays which, on account of the colour scheme used, blend together to cast a glamour of the majesty and grandeur over the sacred spot. In the new wings there are two new altars in gothic style, the donation of two brothers, Messrs. Arulandasamy Nadar and Ponnusamy Nadar, both from Tanjore city. The whole church is paved with black and white marble slabs. It should offer new and un-dreamed of facilities for the Sacraments, Mass and other liturgical functions—to be carried out with devotion and piety, due pomp and circumstance, as becomes divine worship.

As these new improvements were drawing to an end Vailankanni received in Pastoral Visit our late lamented

Bishop Dom Antonio Maria Teixeira. It was as if the good Prelate had come to lay his heavy cross at the feet of Our Lady...His Lordship left Vailankanni already in very indifferent health and passed away within a few days. In the Archives of the Diocese we have abundant documents to prove the great interest with which the Bishops and Administrators of the Diocese have been following the progress and improvement of the Vailankanni Sanctuary. For our purpose it will be enough to submit here:—

A Chronological List of the Bishops and Administrators that governed the Diocese of Mylapore since its erection until the Present Day.

1606 Dom Sebastiao de San Pedro, Augustinian,
1st Bishop of Mylapore.

1615 ,, Luiz de Brito e Menezes, Augustinian,
2nd Bishop of Mylapore.

1634 ,, Luiz Paulo da Estrela, Franciscan,
3rd Bishop of Mylapore.

1639 ,, Fr. Luis de Mello, Augustinian, Bishop-elect.

1640 ,, Fr. Matheus de S. Francisco, Franciscan,
Bishop-elect.

1641 ,, Antonio da Costa, S. J,, Bishop-elect.

1642 Licenc. Jeronimo de Sa, Episcopal-Governor.

1643 Dom Fr. Antonio de Jesus Maria, Benedictine,
Bishop-elect.

1646 ,, Fr. Diogo de Mendonca, of the Order of
the Holy Trinity, Governor.

1650 Dom Fr. Joao Baptista, Dominican, Bishop-elect.
1656 „ Fr. Sebastiao da Conceicao, Carmelite, Bishop-elect.
? „ Matheus Gomes Ferreira, Canon-Dignity of the See of Goa, Bishop-elect.
1668 „ Fr. Antonio de S. Dionysio, Franciscan, Bishop-elect.
1683 Licenc. Antonio de Souza, Episcopal-Governor.
1685 Dr. Constantino Sardinha Rangel, Canon of the See of Goa, Episcopal-Governor.
1693 Dom Gaspar Affonso Alvares, S. J, 4th Bishop of Mylapore.
1708 Dr. Goncalo Lopes, Vicar-General and Administrator.
1709 Father Paulo de Sa, Episcopal-Governor.
1710 Dom Francisco Laynez, S. J,, 5th Bishop of Mylapore.
1715 Father Pascoal Pinheiro da Costa, Episcopal Governor.
1718 Fr. Antonio das Chagas, Franciscan, Episcopal-Governor.
1719 Dom Manoel Sanches Golao, 6th Bishop of Mylapore.
1723 „ Dr. Eugenio Trigueiros, Augustinian, Episcopal Governor, and afterwards Bishop of Macao.
1726 „ Jose Caetano Pinheiro, S. J,, 7th Bishop of Mylapore.
1744 „ Fr. Luiz da Conceicao, Augustinian, Bishop-elect.

1750 „ Fr. Antonio da Incarnacao, Augustinian,
8th Bishop of Mylapore.

1753 Fr. Lucas da Costa Cravo. Episcopal-Governor.

1756 Dom Fr. Theodoro de Santa Maria,
Augustinian, Bishop-elect.

1760 „ Fr. Bernardo de S. Caetano, Augustinian,
9th Bishop of Mylapore.

1780 „ Fr. Luis de Santa Maria, Augustinian,
Episcopal-Governor.

1782 „ Fr. Antonio d' Assumpcao, Augustinian,
Bishop-elect.

1784 „ Fr. de Jesus Maria Jose, Augustinian,
10th Bishop of Mylapore.

1800 Fr. Jose da Graca. Augustinian, Episcopal Governor.

1802 Fr. Thomaz de Noronha, Espiscopal Governor.

1802 Fr. Jose da Piedade, Augustinian,
Episcopal-Governor.

1805 Dom Fr. Joaquim de Menezes Athaide,
Augustinian, 11th Bishop of Mylapore.

1806 Fr. Gaspar de Santa Isabel, Aug., Administrator.

1807 Fr. Jose da Graca. Again Episcopal-Governor.

1811 Dom Francisco Ferreira de Azavedo, Bishop-elect.

1817 Fr. Clemente do Espirito Santo, Franciscan,
Administrator.

1820 Fr. Manuel d'Ave Maria, Episcopal-Governor.

1825 Fr. Jose de Santa Rita, Franciscan, Bishop-elect.

1826 Dom Fr. Estevao de Jesus Maria, Bishop-elect,

1836 Dom Antonio Tristao Vaz Teixeira, Augustinian,
Bishop-elect

1848 Board of Governors:—Very Rev. Fathers Miguel Francisco Lobo, Antonio de Rosario Cardoso

Jose Sebastiao de Souza and Domingos
Jose Antonio Pereira.

1852 Fr. Miguel Francisco Lobo, Episcopal-Governor.

1861 Fr. Domingos Jose Antonio Pereira,
Episcopal-Governor.

1862 Fr. Benjamim Francisco Amarante,
Episcopal-Governor.

1879 Fr. Joao Baptista Gonsalves, Episcopal-Governor.

1886 Dom Henrique Reed da Silva,
12th Bishop of Mylapore.

1897 Dom Antonio de Souza Barroso,
13th Bishop of Mylapore.

1899 Dom Theotonio M. R. Vieira de Castro,
14th Bishop of Mylapore.

1929 Dom Antonio Maria Teixeira,
15th Bishop of Mylapore.

1933 Fr. Francisco P. H. Franco, Administrator
Apostolic.

The Feast.

"The Madras District Gazeteer, under 'Vailankanni' has this pertinent remark on the shrine: "It is chiefly important for a large Roman Catholic festival which takes place there every eighth of September and the nine preceding days in honour of the Virgin Mary as 'Our Lady of Health.' Not Christians only, but Hindus also, come to this place from many parts of the Presidency in the hope of obtaining relief from sickness, and many

miraculous cures are said to take place. This has indeed been called the Lourdes of India. The attendance at the festival is estimated at 30,000......," The estimate is prior to 1906 when the Gazeteer was issued. But to-day any shrewd observer or statistic enumerator will estimate the crowd at not less than 50,000. The pilgrims come not only from many parts of this Presidency but from all the Presidencies in India, and even from Burma, Ceylon, the Straits, Saigon, Fiji and Natal. Among the pilgrims you will find people of different nationalities and divers clans and castes. During the feast and the novena that precedes it, there are about ten priests to attend to the spiritual needs of the pilgrims. At this time, Holy Communion is administered to thousands. There are also every year a good number of conversions from Paganism and some also from Protestantism, Baptism being given after due preparation. Nor is the shrine abandoned during the year. The pilgrims, though few and far between, are still to be seen here all throughout the year. Such as cannot afford to come personally send in their offerings through proxy or transmit them to the Vicar of the church direct by post or rail. A few resort to ingenious ways. They place their offering in the hollow of a bamboo stick, and having sealed both ends, throw it into the sea with the address of the shrine on. It is wonderful to relate that these reach the place safe. There are a few such articles preserved in the presbytery. Recently a bottle arrived under such contrivances.

When the pilgrims come to this holy spot, even men of the most scrupulous caste prejudices, throw their pet

theories overboard and move and jostle about one another freely. In the church all the insular ideas of high and low castes are entirely forgotten and they all without distinction sit by one another. On the festive occasion the petty village is transformed into a busy, noisy city—with its mass of people, its bazaars of every description, and booths of various sizes. To regulate the incoming and outgoing train of humanity, to keep order and discipline, to arrest mischief-makers and thieves, a special police station is established with a resident Inspector. The sanitary arrangements are in the hands of the Sub-Collector of Negapatam, who with a Tahsildar and a number of Sanitary Inspectors take much pains to keep the place clean and healthy. For emergency a small hospital is opened with an Assistant Surgeon."

—*The Monograph.*

We meet at Vailankanni with many people who are led by the mere instinct for pilgrimages, which is a good thing in itself, but we also meet many others who come to fulfil their vows for favours obtained; others again come overburdened with spiritual and temporal troubles. What a spirit of resignation they manifest, even when they have not obtained the cure they so longed for! While those who seek for temporal favours are perhaps too many, greater by far is the number of the pious souls that seek to be delivered from spiritual illness or to strengthen their faith by joint prayer. Our Lady is the Health of the sick and the Refuge of sinners. How many wayward hearts have there not found pardon. Oh! if the confessionals of Vailankanni were not so rigorously sealed with the

sacramental seal, what marvels of Grace they would not be able to recount to us !

Vailankanni is but the premier shrine of Our Lady in India. Many others there are of the same kind all over India, Burma and Ceylon. The Madras Marian Congress of 1921 was an All-India demonstration of the universality of Marian devotions. In fact the number of churches in India dedicated to Our Lady almost equals all the others taken together. Look at the number of the charitable institutions spread throughout India and the whole world and you will find that the sweet name of Mary is a perenial source of inspiration unto charity, which is the Great Law of Christ. The name of the Blessed Mother is so closely associated with that of the Catholic Church in India that if, here in South India, you want to know from a pagan where is the Catholic Church—the surest way of being understood is to ask him: where is *the Mada Coil*—Our Lady's Church.

Ad Jesum per Mariam.

To Jesus thro' Mary, even India.

The value of a Catholic Shrine is best gauged from the Masses that are offered at that Shrine or through it and the Sacraments therein received. Even in this respect Vailankanni leads. The masses are numberless and the Confessions and Holy Communions of last year

came up to 13000 and 15000. Ever since frequent communion came into practice there has been registered at Vailankanni an yearly increase in the reception of the Sacraments. The important item is already mentioned in 1892 by our "Mylaporean" *as difficult to reckon* (Feast in 1892). Last year's figures are bound to soar up higher and higher now that the new church offers greater facilities for both Confession and Communion. We would recommend that pilgrims leave their respective parishes after settling their accounts with God, so that they may approach the Holy Table at once. The surrounding parish priests will have to fight against the old mentality of receiving Communion only once a year, or at most once only in the same pilgrimage as is betrayed by the small difference between the number of Confessions and Communions given above.

Our Lady's Flag.

Last and least, we will turn to the restless flag flying side by side with the two lofty Gothic spires. What is there in a flag—that men should die for it in the battle field, and that even the most peace loving—Christians should get excited over it in the Church premises? If the patriot and soldier look upon their country's flag as the coloured symbol of the country itself—If they look upon it as the embodiment of the safety and honour of their dear homes; even so, in a very human fashion, do the pilgrims of Velankanni pride themselves over Our Lady's

flag. Does not the argument that catches the eye sink deeper into our souls than the formless sound of a fugitive idea knocking at our ears' gates? Explain it as you will, the fact remains that the flag of Velankanni conveys very intense feelings into the majority of the pilgrims. The flag spells loyalty to Our Lady greater than loyalty to any country in the world. The Pilgrimage closes with the ceremony of letting down the flag; the Litany of Our Lady and the *Salve Regina* are sung as a touching *Adieu* to Our Lady of Velankanni.

The Feast in 1892.

Velangany 6—9—92.

To The Editor "Mylapore Catholic Register"

SIR,

A short account of a trip from Mylapore to Velangany I presume to offer you for insertion into the Mylapore Catholic Register, if you deem it worth laying before your numerous readers.

I took the Egmore train on the above date at 5 p. m. and arrived here on the 31st August most singularly at just 5 p.m., after a tedious and wearisome journey on the S. I. R. up to Negapatam. As quick as possible I made my way off to the river where after securing a boat at rather as I thought a moderate price I soon found my way to Velangany. Thecountry on both sides of this stream

throughout the entire way was covered with green vegetation a sure sign that the rains have been abundant in these parts this year. On reaching the landing place at my destination I went straight off to the church where I lukily fell in with a venerable looking priest who readily perceived that I had come there on a religious visit to the shrine of Our Lady of Health. This old gentleman kindly welcomed me to his house and put me up for the time being in a neatly fitted apartment of his spacious residence. How to account for my sudden good fortune, I was quite puzzled at the time; but it was not long before I came to know that the old priest, my host, was noted for his hospitality to strangers. There is nothing very attractive in this place, beyond the church, the priest's house, and some smaller buildings round about. It is nothing more than a lonely deserted village, resorted to once cnly in the year by almost all classes, castes, and creeds for religious purposes. During the present festival the place is literally over crowded with people who have flocked here from distant parts to join the celebration of the festival and to make their vows and other religious offerings at the shrine of Our Lady. The same evening I assisted at the Devotions in the church after which I joined in the Car procession. There were five beautifully-got-up cars containing respectively five statues of saints. The first Car contained the statue of St. Michael, the second that of St. Joachim, the third of St. Sebastian, the fourth of St. Francis Xavier, and the fifth a statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Good Health. A priest under a beautiful canopy carried by four perscns, holding in his hands a small statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary, kept close behind

the fifth Car, the crowds following. On the return of the procession to the church, the blessing of the little statue of the Blessed Virgin was given and the crowds dispersed. This devotion takes place every evening. Every morning during the Novena there are about nine or ten Masses, one of them being a High Mass and the church is filled with worshippers at every Mass. My host who I now see is the Vicar of the Velangany church, the Rev. G. J. Dias, a fine old man indeed, has very kindly introduced me to all the clergymen at present staying here, namely the Very Rev. Jerome Dias De Souza, Episcopal-Governor of Mylapore; the Very Rev. A. J. M. de Carvalho, Vicar-General of Mylapore and Superior of the Tanjore and Tuticorin Missions; the Rev. A. F. da Costa, director of the St. Thome Orphanage, Mylapore; the Rev. M. V. de Sa, Vicar of Tanjore; the Rev. J. J. Luis, Vicar of Nagapatam; the Rev. J,P. Viegas, Vicar of Trichinopoly; the Rev. C. Barreto, Vicar of Avur; the Rev. A. Coutinho, Vicar of Venkatacoolam; the Rev. Fr. Alfonso, Vicar of Conacoopum of the Archdiocese of Pondichery; and to Mr. Joseph Vieira D'Mello, a student of the St. Thome Seminary who accompanied the Episcopal-Governor here. A fine body of priests I find these clergyman to be, kind, sociable and obliging. I must confess I did not calculate, when leaving Mylapore, on meeting with such good luck here. I am happy amidst present surroundings and I admire the orderly way in which the religious services in this church are daily conducted. The Devotion of the assembled multitudes at the shrine of Our Lady at this season is almost incredible; whilst the gold and silver and other offerings made by Catholics, Non-catholics,

Hindus and so many others, exceed all that I had ever seen before. I only hope that all who have come here for the festival to give praise and due honour to the Virgin Mother may obtain the end or ends they had in view visiting her shrine. As for my own part I feel confident that through the intercession of this great Lady my prayers shall be heard and my visit here rewarded. Up to the present every thing has gone on well. There has been scarcely any sickness worth mentioning, except an odd case or two. After the 8th when the feast closes I will write again, in the hope that you will find a corner in your paper for me.

MYLAPOREAN.

(2nd Letter)

12th Septr., 1892.

SIR,

The closing services of the Novena at Velankanni are worth chronicling. On Wednesday evening there was a solemn service in the church, (Vespers), at which all the clergy from the Episcopal-Governor down to Mr. Vieira de Mello, assisted in full canonicals. A very grand procession took place after this service. The church was thronged. The procession was orderly enough, considering the immensity of its demensions. On the folllowing morning the High Mass was rendered with solemn effect. The Episcopal-Governor celebrated. I could not reckon the number of those who approached the Lord's Table. After Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament all was over.

MYLAPOREAN.

The Feast in 1921, by Rt. Rev. Mgr. A. M. Teixeira, Late Bishop of Mylapore.

Velangani.

Our Lady "At Home" to Her Children.

Who in this wide quarter of the globe has not heard of Our Lady of Velangani? Of Our Lady of Health—who loves to lavish Her Graces so profusedly on Her Children from that little throne in that insignificant village known as Velangani? Who has not been the recipient of Her favours from the North-West-Frontier to far-away Assam, from the Gigantic Hymalayas down to the Fishery Coast? From Burma to the Straits, from Ceylon to South Africa? Pilgrims, messages, requests and offerings alike find their way from all these distances into this hollowed spot—wherein the Queen of Heaven deigns to bestow on all a smile, to grant a grace, a favour, a request—be it on the field of temporal goods, bodily health, or moral rectification. The concourse this year—the Mopplah rebellion and the Madras labour troubles notwithstanding—was estimated at 40,000 during the Novena that preceded the 8th of September, to say nothing of the great numbers that visit the Shrine all the year round.

The writer of these lines had heard much of Velangani, its crowds, it vows, its favours, and was beginning to feel guilty for not having attempted a pilgrimage

himself all these 30 years he has lived on Indian soil—when the opportunity at last arrived and found himself in a "coach-and-pair." trying to take by assault the indiscribable road that leads there from the railway at Negapatam—and a standing monument of Taluq Board road—keeping zeal and placid activities. For five long miles along this phantom of a road the jolting, the knocking, the creeking combined with the yelling, of my cartman to his "Rajah" and the other creature without a name, that dragged the cart over the ruts and the large holes on the road over pools of muddy water, was, believe me, something of a new experience. I feared at every step to damage the slender frame of my bandy either with my head or shoulders, knees or feet—careless for a while of the physical consequences to these latter. An urchin in high hopes of a copper then rushes towards us appealing to Our Lady crying out: *Madavé! Madavê!* And while we progressed on our journey (myself, the cart-driver, "Rajah" and the other nameless bull) I wondered within myself where all the thousands were, I had heard of, and how they were going to get to Velangani, for this was already the eve of the Feast of Our Lady, and but for a few stragglers along the road which, thanks to "Rajah" and his faithful auxiliary, we had by now overtaken, I saw very little of what might be expected to form a crowd, and began to fear that the Mopplahs were at the bottom of it. My fears, however, soon vanished. This road, I soon understood, is used only by such visitors as feel too lazy to enjoy a five miles walk from Negapatam along the sea-shore, or fear a salt-water bath

in a country-boat. I there and then made up my mind to risk the salt-water bath and to avoid the road.

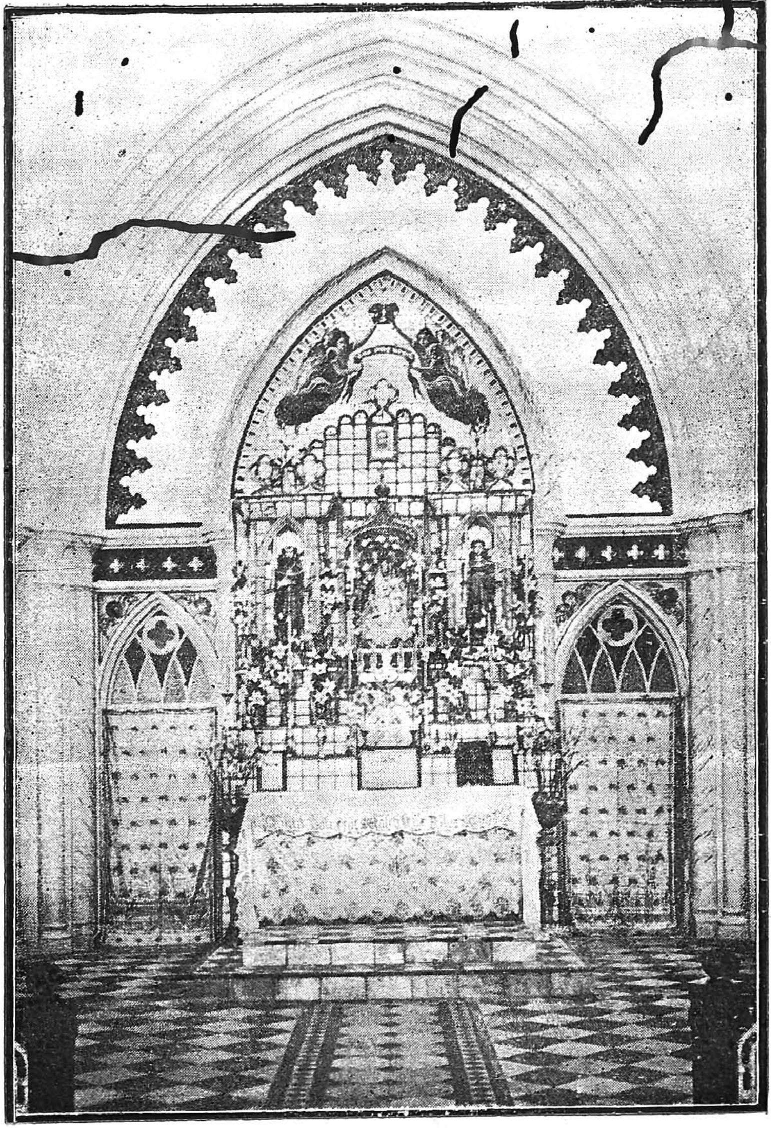
Better times, however, are in store for Velangani. A very influential Mahomedan gentleman of Negapatam has taken up the matter in good earnest, subscriptions are coming in from all sides—a client of Our Lady alone from the Straits has promised Rs. 10,000! Our Lady Herself will bear part of the expences, and it is to be hoped that at the next festival the lame and the sick will be given an opportunity of praying personally at the Shrine instead of sending their own to do it for them. I already see the sight with the eyes of my imagination, viz., a continuous string of cars, busses, carriages and carts, conveyances of all types and descriptions from Negapatam to Velangani along that grand trunk road that is going to come, instead of the interminable line of pedestrians along the sea-side. And along with this vision that of double or three times the present number of pilgrims.

But, coming back to "Rajah" I must say he did his duty well. The same cannot be related of his companion who complained and protested that the ruts in the sand track were too deep for him until he fell miserably out of sheer exhaustion—"Rajah" meanwhile standing, laughing and mocking at this brother's weakness. We had one mile more out of the seven to make, and with a few words of encouragement the nameless animal got up again and did the rest bravely.

Our Lady's Shrine.

You can scarcely catch a glimpse of it from this quarter before you are actually close by. The over-growth, the palms and the trees on all sides prevent you from seeing even the tall well-finished gothic pair of towers that now grace the entrance to the Shrine. From the sea it is quite otherwise. The towers are a beautiful land-mark for all sea-farers—the clients of Our Lady in parti-cular. The Church itself is nice, neat both in an out and of the same style as the towers though a bit too small for festival needs. The Parish House attached seems to have been made by fits and starts but helps considerably in giving the "*ensemble*" the appearance of a monastery. And a monastery it must have once been for everything around bespeaks of former Franciscan activities.

On entering the Church you cannot help being struck by the simplicity of everything around you—the simplicity of the worshippers themselves, who form Our Lady's great family there; the simplicity with which they behave and are treated, and not less so the simpli-city of the great centre of attraction itself: Our Lady's Throne, or Altar—studded with innumerable mosaics in blue—descriptive of biblical scenes—to this day a wonder of workmenship and a mystery. There are no benches there, and no social distinctions are observed. Everybody finds his place where best he can, rich and poor, learned and ignorant, the grandly dressed and the not so dressed rub shoulders together, and Our Lady smiles on all alike, gives them all a mother's reception, allows them a few



THE HIGH ALTAR
VAILANKANNI.

liberties—such as crowding everywhere, even up to the very steps of Her Altar and the pulpit platform.

Yes, if you saw Mary's Children there invade the sanctuary sparing no door-post or window-sill sing and pray, smile and cry;—if you saw their faces radiant with hope and beaming with joy, arms outstretched in the direction of Her Throne; if you saw one dozen Priests—many too few—Our Lady's stewards—ministering day and night to the crowds in divers ways spiritual and temporal; if you saw the hundreds and the thousands that approach the Holy Table, you could not but say in your heart of hearts: *verily, the finger of God is here!*

But why, you will ask, should Our Lady prefer one particular spot to dispense Her favours from to another? I must avow I cannot reply fully to your query,—beyond the fact that, if God chooses to do so, why should you question it? Does not Lourdes also exist, Compostella Pompei, and the Holy Places? Innumerable shrines, if not of world-wide fame, at all events *national*—wherefrom Our Lady and the Saints look more benignly upon Her Children and their Clients? And this seems to answer an instinct of human nature found everywhere—even outside the true Fold, even in the pagan world..............
..................................*Teste David Cum Sybilla!*

Writes an esteemed contemporary—*The Angelus:*

"Pilgrimages are very ancient practices in the Catholic Church, and they so clearly correspond to a

psychic and moral want of our nature that they are found in every religion. The Jews of old made their yearly pilgrimage to the Temple of Jerusalem. The Egyptians went to Bubastis to worship Sekket. The Greek repaired to the oracle of Apollo at Delphi. Parsis make pilgrimages to Sanjan and Naosari, the oldest places where they built their "Atash-Beheram" (fire-temples) and lit the liturgical fire. Mahomedans will die happy if at least once they have seen the Caaba of Mecca. Hindus travel to Benares to bathe in the Ganges for the ablution of their sins. Budhists all the year round flock to Kapilavastu, the birth-place of Budha. The people of France will for ever make pilgrimages to the martyred and glorious Verdun; admirers of Napoleon will go and see his tomb, if they happen to pass through Paris; lovers of Shakespeare are sure, if only they can afford it, to pay a visit to Stratford-on-Avon. Though the departed spirits of the thousands of heroic *poilus*, the souls of Napoleon and of Shakespeare, may be anywhere in the world beyond, surely they are not dwelling in this earth. Still people love to visit certain places to better, more vividly and warmly, bring to their mind some great event or great truth."

Just so—the labour involved, the inconveniences of the pilgrimage, the hunger and the thirst experienced, all contribute mightily towards offering God satisfaction for sin, to spur ourselves on to acts of virtue and to increase our sentiments of Faith, Hope and Charity—for as in things human there is also in the Divine, or supernatural, a certain proportion between the graces obtained and the

labour involved. That is why Our Lady's Children will always visit Her in Shrines where She is known to dispense most graces and favours from—and Velangani of the South is one of Her best known, best loved, most frequented by Her Children of all colours and races and social standing—outsiders not excluded.

Vespers, Procession, and High Mass.

The greatest crowds assemble at Velangani on the Flag Day—that is on the day the flag of Our Lady is hoisted up, viz., the 29th August, and the two last days of the Feast, viz., the 7th and 8th of September. During the Novena crowds come and go after fulfilling their vows and staying with Our Lady—some a couple of days, others three, and others again throughout the Novena. A large number of rooms and "*Chatrams*" are provided for such—the majority by far, however, has to go without a shelter, the adjoining tope being their common habitation. The writer of these lines went round all these and no-where did he see signs of merry-making as many suspect people go there for. Everything was proportionately well-ordered—a thing which you could not well expect from crowds of that magnitude but for religious instinct pervading there.

Then Vespers came presided over by the Vicar-General of the Diocese and were sung by Priests and people alike with sentiment and devotion. The *Ave-Maris-Stella* in which all took part, men, women and children, and

which everybody seemed to know by heart and understand, sounded more like a song of triumph for Our Lady than a Hymn of praise. Oh, if you only saw the outpouring of the heart, in that heterogeneous crowd, that accompanied the words of the beautiful *Ave-Maris-Stella!* After the sermon, Our Lord came in and blessed His people.

Next, the grand torch-light procession started. This is an item, in Catholic festivals in India, of thrilling importance and great excitement. And few Cotholic processions in India can boast of equal pathos about them. Over two hundred sturdy men are needed to move along the magnificent car which towers tens of feet above the heads of the people in pure gothic style—the car itself being a *fac-simile* of the spires in front of the Church. And Our Lady has then a closer look of all Her Children who follow Her singing Her praises. The crowd is immense, you see nothing but a sea of heads. Three quarters of an hour later, the procession returns.

And then comes Our Lady's Children's turn to entertain Our Lady to lovely and inspiring poetical recitations in Her honour by famous scholarly pandits—to which standers-by listen with gasping breath and deep attention—until the small hours of the morning.

A solemn High Mass and sermon at 8 in the morning is the principal feature of the morning service. Hundreds make their confessions, receive Holy Communion and prepare to return home. The very last ceremony, however,

takes place in the evening when Our Lady's flag is brought down from the tall mast that keeps it floating for 9 days. The people rush to kiss it, and it has to be carried back to church shoulders high lest it be torn by an excess of devotion. It is finally placed on the High-Altar and after incence the officiating Priest reverently kisses it, followed by the others and the crowd that has patiently waited for this last homage they wish so much to pay to their Heavenly Queen and Mother.

Thus ends every year the great festival of Our Lady at Velangani. Her Children then go home only to return again, should Our Lady give them strength and health to carry out this cherished desire of their hearts and Our Lady on Her part wishes Her children God speed with the promise to be "At Home" again to them the following year should they continue to love God above all things and their neighbour as themselves.

A. M. T.

(The Catholic Register, 1st October, 1921.)

The Liturgy of the Feast of the Nativity.

The church celebrates the Feast of the Nativity of Our Lady on the 8th of September. The Nativity of the Mother of God is second only to the birth of Our Lord—Christmas. "Mary is inseparable from Jesus in the divine plan, wherefore the Liturgy applies to her what Holy Scripture says of the Eternal Wisdom which is the

Word "by whom all was made." Like Christ the Virgin presides over the whole work of creation, for having been chosen of all eternity to give us the Saviour, it is she with her Son whom God had chiefly in view when he created the world." (Daily Missal, by Dom Gaspar Lefebure, O. S. B. Introduction to the Feast of the Nativity.)

First Vespers

(7th September)

Antiphons :

1. The Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, sprung from the seed of Abraham, from the tribe of Juda, and from the noble lineage of David. Psalm 109.

2. *To-day is the nativity of the Holy Virgin Mary, whose glorious life is the ornament of all the Churches.* Psalm 112.

3. Sprung from a royal race, Mary shines forth to the world ; devoutly we implore that by her prayers we may be helped in mind and spirit. Psalm 121.

4. With heart and mind let us sing praises to Christ, on the sacred solemnity of Mary the peerless Mother of God. Psalm 126,

5. Let us celebrate with joy the nativity of the Blessed Mary, that she may intercede for us to the Lord Jesus Christ, Psalm 147.

Chapter :

From the beginning, and before the world, was I created, and unto the world to come I shall not cease to be ; and in the holy dwelling place I have ministered before Him. Eclus. 24, 14.

Responsary : Thanks be to God.

Hymn.

1. Ave Maris Stella, Dei Mater alma Atque semper Virgo Felix cæli porta	Hail, O Star of Ocean, God's own Mother blest, Ever sinless Virgin, Gate of Heav'nly rest.
2. Sumens illud Ave Gabrielis ore, Funda nos in pace, Mutans Hevæ nomen.	Taking that sweet Ave Which from Gabriel came, Peace confirm within us, Changing Eva's name.
3. Solve vincla reis, Profer lumen cæcis, Mala nostra pelle, Bona cuncta posce.	Break the sinners' fetters, Make our blindness day, Chase all evils from us, For all blessings pray.
4. Monstra Te esse matrem Sumat per te preces Qui pro nobis natus Tulit esse tuus	Show thyself a Mother, May the Word Divine, Born for us thine Infant, Hear our prayers thro' thine,

5. Virgo singularis,
Inter omnes mitis,
Nos culpis solutos,
Mites fac et castos.

Virgin all excelling,
Mildest of the mild,
Free from guilt preserve us,
Meek and undefiled.

6. Vitam præsta puram,
Iter para tutum;
Ut videntes Jesum
Semper collætemur.

Keep our life all spotless,
Make our way secure,
Till we find in Jesus
Joy for evermore.

7. Sit laus Deo Patri,
Summo Christo decus,
Spiritui Sancto,
Tribus honor unus. *Amen.*

Praise to God the Father,
Honour to the Son,
In the Holy Spirit,
Be the Glory One. *Amen.*

Versicle:

To-day is the Nativity of the Holy Virgin Mary.

Responsary:

Whose glorious life is the ornament of all the Churches.

Antiphon at the Magnificat:

Let us keep the feast of of the most noble nativity of the glorious Virgin Mary, who both attained to the dignity of a mother, and withal lost not her virgin purity.

Prayer:

Impart to thy servants we beseech Thee, O Lord, the gift of Thy heavenly grace: so that we, for whom the bringing forth of her Divine Child by the Blessed Virgin was the beginning of salvation, may, on this the joyful festival of her nativity be blessed with an increase in peace of heart. Through Our Lord.

Mass.

Introit.—Hail, holy Mother! giving birth to thy Child, thou didst bring forth the King who ruleth the heavens and the earth for ever and ever. Ps. 44, 2. My heart hath uttered a good word: I speak my works to the King. Glory be to the Father...

Collect or Prayer as above, at Vespers.

Epistle.—Lesson from the Book of Wisdom. The Lord possessed me in the beginning of His ways, before He made anything, from the beginning. I was set up from all eternity, and of old, before the earth was made. The depths were not as yet and I was already conceived; neither had the fountains of water as yet sprung out;

The mountains with their huge bulk had not as yet been established: before the hills were brought forth; he had not yet made the earth, nor the rivers, nor the poles of the world. When he prepared the heavens I was there; when with a certain law and compass he enclosed the depths; when He established the sky above, and poised the fountains of waters; when He compassed the sea with bounds, and set a law to the waters that they should not pass their limits; when He balanced the foundations of the earth; *I was with Him* forming all things, and was delighted every day, playing before Him at all times, playing in the world: *and my delight is to be with the children of men.* Now, therefore, ye children, hear me: Blessed are they that keep my ways. Hear instruction and be wise, and refuse it not. Blessed is the

man that heareth me, and that watcheth daily at my gates, and waiteth at the posts of my doors. He that shall find me shall find life, and shall have salvation from the Lord.

Gradual.—O Virgin Mary blessed and venerable art thou: without blemish to thy maidenhood, thou didst become Mother of the Saviour.

O Virgin Mother of God, He whom the whole world availeth not to contain, being made man, shut up Himself within Thy womb.

Alleluia. Alleluia.—V. Happy indeed art thou, O Sacred Virgin, and of all high praise most worthy: for out of thee hath risen the sun of justice, Christ who is our God.—*Alleluia.*

The Gospel.—St. Mathew, I, 1—16.

The Creed—is said.

Offertory.—Truly blessed art thou, O Virgin Mary: the Creator of all things thou didst bear; Him who made thee thou didst bring forth; and a virgin for evermore thou dost remain.

Secret.—May all our hope of help, O Lord, ever be in the loving kindness of Thy only-begotten Son. May He, Jesus Christ, Our Lord, who when born of a virgin took not from, but hallowed, his mother's virginity, on

this festival-day of her Nativity, wash away from our souls all stain of sin, and make our offerings to find favour in Thy sight: who liveth and reigneth with Thee together with the Holy Ghost world without end.—*Amen.*

Preface.—It is truly meet and just, right and availing unto salvation, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks unto thee, O holy Lord, Father Almighty, and everlasting God; And on the Nativity of the Blessed Mary, ever a virgin; should praise and bless and proclaim Thee. For she conceived Thine only-begotten Son by the overshadowing of the Holy Ghost; and losing not the glory of her virginity, gave forth to the world the everlasting light—Jesus Christ Our Lord. Through Whom the Angels praise Thy majesty, the Dominions worship it, and the Powers are in awe. The Heavens and the heavenly Hosts, and the blessed Seraphim join together in celebrating their joy. With these, we pray Thee, join our voices also, while we say with lowly praise:—

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts. Heaven and earth are full of Thy glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

(For the continuation of the Mass see the Canon of your Prayer-Book.)

Communion.—Blessed is the womb of the Virgin Mary, which bore the Son of the eternal Father.

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Postcommunion.—Grant, we beseech Thee, O Lord, that Thy holy sacraments, which we have received in celebration of this festival-day may be for us both a healing remedy against all the ills of this life, and an earnest of the happiness in that which is to come. Through Our Lord Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth with Thee, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, world without end.—*Amen.*

N.B.—For the *Common* Parts of the Mass here omitted see Missal.

Mary Our Mother.

"Divine Providence, that rules and directs all creatures, has for man, endowed with an immortal soul, special regard and kindness. Just as a good head of a family cannot, ought not, to abandon his wife and children, so too, the infinitely good God, who has created us out of his free will and goodness cannot abandon us. Both history and personal experience have proved this...

When the happy hour of Redemption arrives, the very Son of God descends from Heaven into this world, assumes human nature and dies on the Cross to redeem us, to save us..................And even after His death, He remains with us (in the Blessed Sacrament) thus fulfilling His promise: *Behold I shall be with you unto the consummation of the world.*

In this work of Redemption and Salvation, Our Lord wanted His Mother to be associated with Him. Let us just reflect upon Our Lord's agony on Calvary.

Like a father that spends his life in working for his children, Jesus had given us all without measure and without reserve. He gave us His doctrine and with it light and life. He gave us grace and resurrection. He instituted the Sacraments, as so many other means of sanctification. But His love was not yet satiated. Now that He is about to die, He wishes to dispose of what remains with Him, He wishes to make His last will. But He has only His dear Mother. It is Her that He bequeaths to us! What a solemn moment! All mankind are His heirs: the gentiles, represented there by the Roman soldiers; the Jews by the inhabitants of Jerusalem who had come to witness His death; the sinners by the two crucified thieves; and the just by the holy women who accompanied Jesus to the heights of Golgotha.

John, the holy Evangelist, is the one that is charged to put down in writing Our Lord's words.

Jesus pardons the repentant thief. He forgives His executioners: *Father, forgive them*...........And then exclaims: *Behold thy Mother!*

And Mary most holy, the Virgin pure, the Treasure of Heaven and earth, the *hand-maid of the Lord*, receives us as her children, brought forth in the immense pains of Calvary!

Prostrate before Our Lady we cannot but say with our holy Mother the Church, with the Christians of all times: "Hail, holy Queen, Mother of mercy, hail our life, our sweetness and hope! To thee we cry, poor banished children of Eve, to thee we send up our sighs mourning and weeping in this vale of tears! Hail!"

Fulfilling Jesus' bequest, we see her with the Apostles waiting for the descent of the Holy Spirit; we see her praying along with the primitive Christians and participating in their afflictions.

And how loving a mother has she not been throughout all these ages!...

Even though it were possible to count the sands of the sea and the stars in the heavens, it would yet not be possible to count the gifts which the Virgin most holy has showered upon souls." (Pastoral Letter on Fatima by H. L. the Bishop of Leiria, Portugal.)

Saints and Popes on Our Lady as Mediatrix of all Graces.

"The will of God is that we should have everything through Mary," says St. Bernard.

"All gifts of the Holy Ghost," says St. Bernardine de Sienna, "are distributed by Mary to those to whom

she chooses, whenever she wishes, and as much as she wishes."

"By the communion of sorrows and of will between Christ and Mary," says Pope Pius the X, "she has deserved to become the dispenser of all the blessings which Jesus acquired for us by His blood."—*Encyclical, February. 2, 1904.*

"Through the Virgin, "says St. Bernardine de Sienna," life-giving graces flow from Christ, who is the head, into His mystical body"—the church.

"Through her," adds St. Antonius, "come from Heaven all the graces granted to the world!" What all the saints, united to Thee, may obtain for us," writes St. Anselm, "Thy pleading alone may obtain for us without the help of their prayers."

"We may affirm," declares Pope Leo XIII, "that nothing, by the will of God, is given to us without Mary's mediation, in such a way that just as no one can approach the Almighty Father but through His Son, likewise no one, so to speak, can approach Christ but through His Mother."

Mediatrix Prayer:

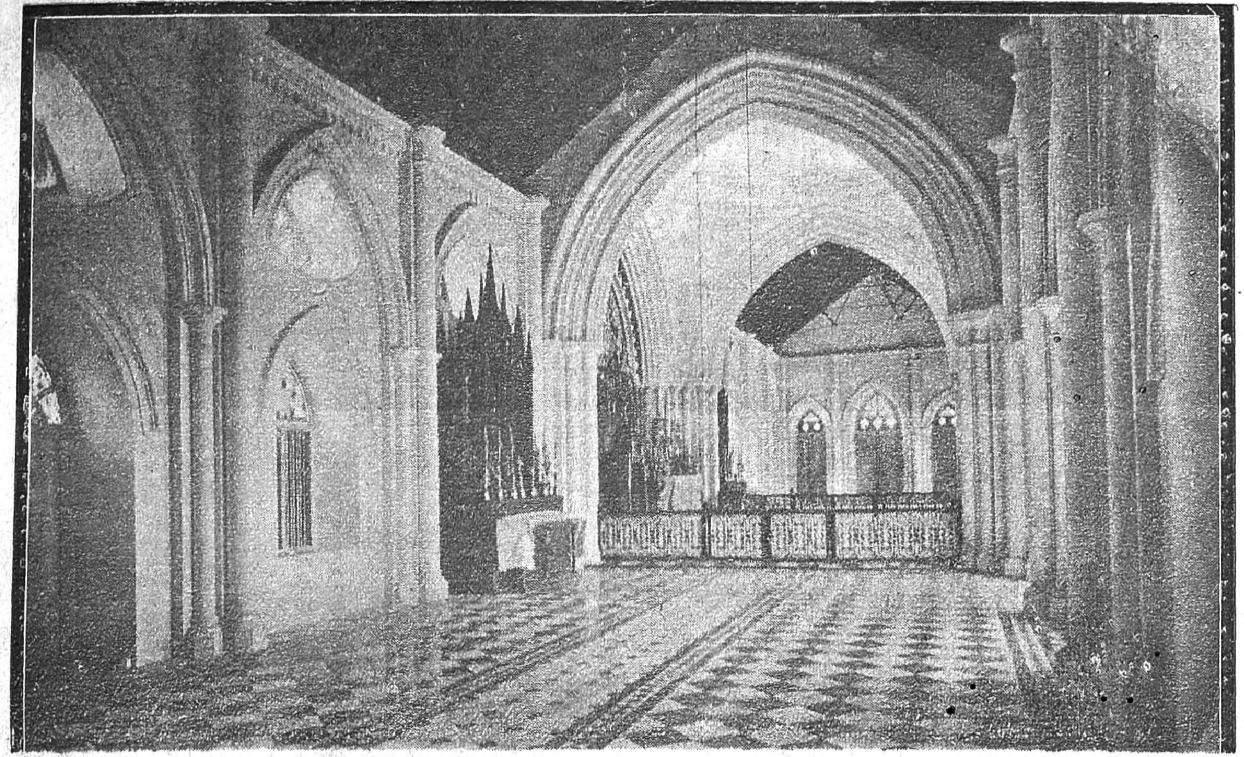
O Lord Jesus Christ, our Mediator with the Father, who hast appointed the most blessed Virgin, Thy Mother, our Mother also, and our Mediatrix before Thee—grant that whosoever draweth nigh to Thee, to beseech any good

things, may receive all things, through her and rejoice. Who livest and reignest......world without end.—*Amen.*

Novena to Our Lady of Velangani.

O most Holy Virgin! Who wert chosen by the Adorable Trinity from all eternity to be the most pure Mother of Jesus, permit me, Thy humble and devoted client, to remind Thee of the joy Thou didst receive in the instant of the Most Sacred Incarnation of Our Divine Lord, and during the nine months Thou didst carry Him in Thy Chaste womb. I wish most sincerely that I could renew, or even increase that joy, by the fervour of my prayers. O tender Mother of the afflicted! Grant me under my present necessities that peculiar protection Thou hast promised to those who devoutly commemorate this ineffable joy. Relying on the infinite mercies of Thy Divine Son; trusting in that promise which He has made, that those who ask should receive; and penetrated with confidence in Thy powerful prayers; I most humbly entreat Thee to intercede for me, and to obtain for me the favours which I petition for in this Novena, if it be the holy will of God to grant them; and if not to ask for me whatever graces I most stand in need of—*Here specify your requests.*

I desire by this Novena, which I now offer in Thy honour, to prove the lively confidence I have in Thy intercession. Accept it, I beseech Thee, in honour of



THE TWO NEW WINGS OF THE CHURCH, VAILANKANNI.

that supernatural love and joy with which Thy sacred heart was replenished during the abode of Thy dear Son in Thy womb; in veneration of which, I offer Thee the sentiments of my heart, and these nine Hail Marys.

Repeat the Hail Mary nine times
and then say the following prayer.

O Mother of God; accept these salutations in union with the respect and veneration with which the Angel Gabriel first hailed Thee "full of grace."—I wish most sincerely that they may become so many gems in the crown of Thy ascendantal glory, which will increase in brightness to the end of the world. I beseech Thee, O Comfortress of the afflicted, by the joy Thou didst receive when the "Word was made flesh," to obtain for me the favours and graces which I have now implored through Thy powerful intercession. For this end, I offer Thee all the good works which have ever been performed in Thy honour. I most humbly entreat Thee, for the love of the amiable Heart of Jesus, with which Thine was ever so inflamed, to hear my humble prayers, and to obtain my requests.

Mother Mary, to Thy keeping
Soul and body we confide;
Toiling, resting, waking, sleeping
Be Thou ever at our side.
Cares that vex us, joys that please us,
Life and death we trust to Thee;
Thou must make Thine—all for Jesus,
And for all eternity."

Favours.

It would indeed take volumes to put on record the innumerable favours received by the people at the hands of Our Lady of Health—sickness cured, dangers averted, mental worries banished, moral evils checked, and a variety of temporal benefits granted. It would be an impossible task too, as many a favour thus granted remains unknown to the public and unregistered in books. In the archives of the Vailankanni church are found four portfolios wherein are chronicled some of the numerous favours granted to the stricken humanity. We can give here but a select few among them in order to instil into the hearts of the public a true love for and a strong confidence in Our Lady of Health of Vailankanni:—

Thanksgiving.

1. In 1891 my right arm was seized with excruciating pain. As days advanced the arm began to fester. After six months' constant treatment, I felt no better, rather worse. In the civil hospital the doctors advised me to have my arm amputated as that was the only means of saving my life. I was not willing to undergo the operation. Hence I turned with confidence to Our Lady of Vailankanni and prayed incessantly. Wonderful to say that my arm began to heal, and soon it was once again a healthy arm.

(Signature is illegible).

Le 7 Fevrier 1898. *Pondicherry.*

2. This is to certify that while I was in Moulemein. and Rangoon in 1891 and 92, I had cataract in both my eyes. Various doctors treated me but to no avail. I then made a vow to Our Blessed Lady of Vailankanni. Now both my eyes are clear and good.

SILVESTER JACOBS,
Press Supdt.,
246, Begum Baazar,

6—2—1899.

Pudupet, Madras.

3. Having suffered from an abscess on my left cheek for about 8 months and not being cured with the best treatment at Trichy, I went to Madras. It was while there I made a vow to Our Lady of Vailankanni and was cured. Having been cured of the abscess I have this day fulfilled my vow with very many thanks.

EDWARD VICTOR ASHE,
Foreman, Trichy.

3—4—1899.

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4. Having suffered from two deep abscesses, one on my chest and the other on my right side, I went through a serious operation in the General Hospital, Madras. The wound would not close and I was told by many doctors that it would never close. Failing medical aid I made a vow to Blessed Virgin Mary of Vailankanni that I would

go and stay there with a firm mind and good faith in Our Blessed Lady of Vailankanni. After 6 months I was thoroughly cured.

3—4—1899. P. C. W. D'CRUZ,

Late Engine Driver, S. I. R.

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5. This is to certify that when I was in trouble at Madras regarding a court affair in which I was concerned, I made a vow to Vailankanni church with a firm belief. As soon as I made the vow, everything ended favourably to me. I have come this month to fulfil the vow.

P. DOGGAN,

27—11—1899. *Guard, M. Ry*

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6. For many years after our marriage there was no issue. That was a source of trouble to us. We prayed to Our Lady of Vailankanni for a child and promised the child to be named after Her. Now she has granted our request and we have come to fulfil our vow.

G. BAKKIAM,

18—2—1901. *Villupuram.*

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7. I, Anthoniammal of Enjuda (Burma), do hereby declare that my son Aseerpatham was dumb from his birth till he was 5 years old. Then, I made a vow to the Blessed Virgin Mary of Health of Vailankanni that if my son should begin to speak, I will pay a visit annually to

her shrine. Four months after I made my vow, my son began to speak. Now after 8 years, I come to perform my vow..................

8. I, Gnanammal, belong to the Church of England. I was ailing from some internal disease for nearly 13 years and after trying all medical aid I failed to obtain a cure. One day I was advised by a Catholic friend to pray to the Mother of Vailankanni. Accordingly I prayed to her and made a vow to pay a visit to her church. Two months after I was cured of my illness. Now I am willing to become a Catholic owing to this favour received from Her, notwithstanding my husband's objection to my conversion.

GNANAMMAL,

6—9—1901. *Purasawalkam, Madras.*

9, I had three still born children. After making a vow to the Blessed Mother of Vailankanni I got a boy child alive in 1900.

8—9—1901. MRS. J. S. CLARKE,
Vizagapatam.

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10. My husband was very ill with Mandalay fever for 3 months and the doctor of the hospital invalided him to India for 6 months. On that day I made a vow to our Dear Blessed Mother of Vailankanni to come to her

church and give her candles and offering as my means would permit me. From that day (17th December) his fever left him and never returned. He is quite well and hearty now.

At the same time my daughter Sena was also very bad with fever for 21 days and the doctor told me that they could not do anything more. I again made another request to the same Virgin Mary of Vailankanni and from that day her fever left her. She is also quite well now and I am grateful to our Dear Mother for restoring them to health.

8—9—1901.

MARY CRAEN,

Mandalay, (Upper Burmah.)

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11. I have been to Vailankanni on three occasions with my husband and two children. My children and I were Protestants once. But since one of my boys got an attack of cholera, I firmly made a vow to Our Mother to join the faith of her followers. After which my son recovered, and since then I have always tried to come yearly to the chapel and will do so till life would last.

28—9—1901 MRS. E. CHRISTOPHER.

The above are facts and written with her free will.

J. CHRISTOPHER,

Loco Foreman, S. M. Ry

12. I was a Sivite from Gooty. My grand-daughter was very ill—one leg and hand being paralyzed. We came to Vailankanni with the promise to stop there for a year in order to obtain the child's cure. One year passed and there was no sign of recovery. At the close of the year I made her study the Catechism of the Christian religion and had her baptised with the name of Arokiamary. Soon after she got better being able to use her stricken limbs freely. As an act of thanksgiving I also became a Christian.

28—9—1901. VIAGULAMARY.

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13. I was attacked with typhoid fever on the 15th August 1901 and after 21 days' severe fever I got cured through the mercy of Providence. After a fortnight the fever relapsed, the case becoming very critical. Hopes of recovery and speech were failing though medical aid was always at hand. Thinking that what is impossible to man is possible to 'Virgo Potens' I made a vow to our B. Lady of Vailankanni that I would with my wife pay a visit to her shrine if I am cured. Within 15 minutes a miraculous change was noticed and the doctor pronounced that I was out of danger, and I was completely cured and I now come to fulfil my poor promise at the feet of Our Mother Immaculate, whose power and authority no human tongue can express. I echo with the greatest hope the words of great St. Ligouri: "Happy is he who serves and trusts in thee."

V. MARIADOSS IYER,
Popham's Broadway,
Madras.

18—12—1901.

14. Twenty years ago, after my delivery of a child, my limbs were quite paralyzed for years and my child too was suffering from sore eyes which caused bleeding. I prayed and made a vow to Our Lady of Vailankanni. Then my child and myself were immediately cured of our illness. My son was again seriously ill on account of a fall from horseback in consequence of which he had to undergo an operation in the hospital. After praying and making a vow to Our Lady of Vailankanni, he immediately got cured.

6—9—1901. ELIZABETH,
New Town, Madras.

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15. "I hereby render thanks to Our Lady of Vailankanni for having cured me of malaria fever, frequent attacks of which I had been subject to for more than 2 years. These attacks of fever caused many breaks in my studies, but since September 1909, after a visit to the shrine of Our Lady, of Vailankanni, I have been free from fever. Miss E. Mascarenhas—No. 19, Sunkarama Street, Georgetown, Madras."

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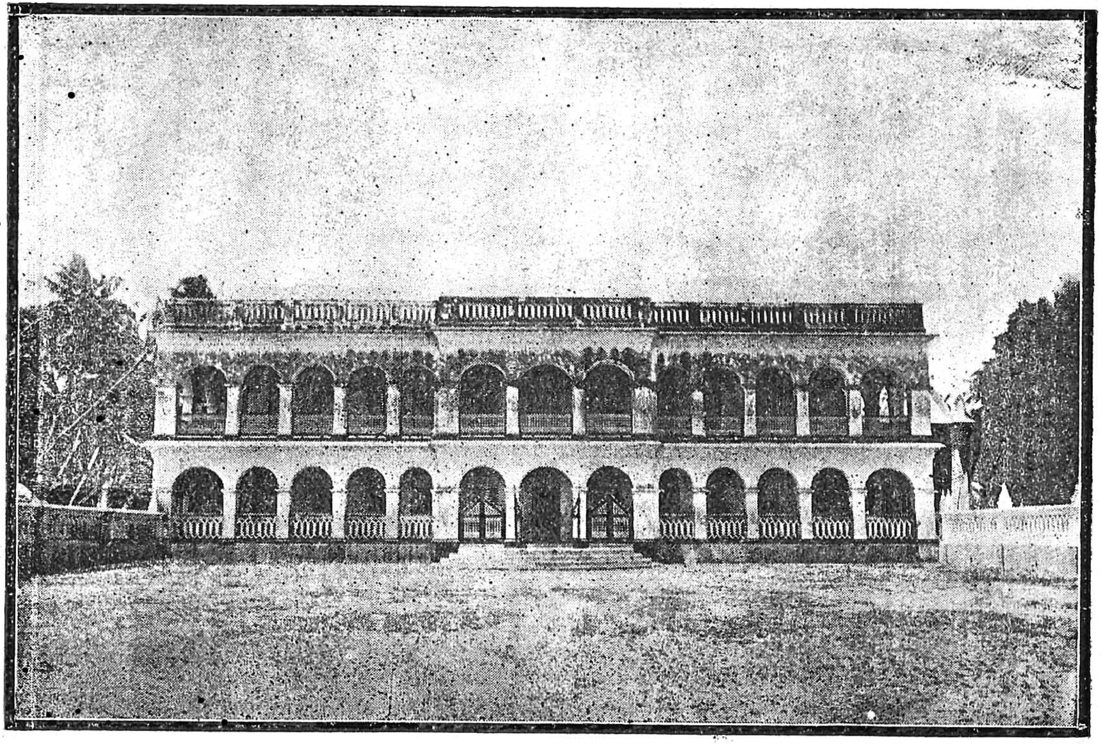
16. "My wife, my son and myself visited the shrine of Our Blessed Mother of Vailankanni to fulfil several vows. My wife and myself have placed our full confidence in this Blessed Virgin, who has granted us numerous favours. I must here mention the most important: My wife was miraculously saved from a very serious illness, *ten days after our marriage,* when she was given up by three



The New Parochial House
VAILANKANNI.

doctors.—L. E. Baude de Bunuctat, Agent, Messrs. Besr & Co., Karikal.

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17. "Having been very ill with *Typhoid fever* at Mominabad (Deccan), and being considered to be in a dangerous state by the doctor, I made a vow to Our Blessed Mother at Vailankanni to pray for, intercede and obtain my recovery to health, which if it should please God to grant I would journey to the church of Our Blessed Mother at Vailankanni and there give a *silver body*. I have come this day to fulfil my vow and not having been able to get the silver body made, I have given Rupees Twenty as my offering.—W. Coshan, wife of Assistant Surgeon F. W. A. Coshan. Indian Subordinate Medical Department, Mominabad, Deccan."

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18. "Having *suffered with Diabetes for about four years* and being unable to be cured, I made a vow to th Blessed Virgin Mary of Vailankanni, that if I was cured I would give a silver sprinkler as an offering. Having been cured absolutely of the Diabetes I have this day performed my vow with very many thanks.—D. Marian, Tuticorin."

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19. "I was very *anxious to have a son after my marriage.* During fifteen years I had *only four girls*, therefore I made a vow to Our Lady of Vailankanni to give me a son. Accordingly my desire has been granted. I come to-day to fulfil my vow, as promised to Our Blessed Lady of Vailankanni—Abu Road, R. W. Ry. A. D'Sena."

19. "I visited the Church dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary at Vailankanni to perform the vow which was made by Mrs. F. Moraes during the time when I was accidentally *poisoned and near death's door ;* and now, thanks be to God, I am still alive to come here and perform the vow made by my dear friend. I have given a donation of Rs. 6 to the church, and annas 8 for candles. —René Berry, Civil Surgeon, Bidar, H. H. The Nizam's Dominions, Hyderabad, Deccan."

20. About the year 1902 my wife and I visited the church at Vailankanni in fulfilment of a vow I made to visit the church and return thanks to God and His Holy Mother for the *recovery of my eyes.* When there, we were receiving Communion, my wife remembered that *our eldest daughter* had a number of *warts in her face,* hands and body which would not leave in spite of various remedies that we had repeatedly tried, and she immediately implored the help of Our Lady of Vailankanni *for the cure of the warts.* On our return home my wife called our daughter to her, hoping to see her somewhat better, but to her and my great surprise we found that *the warts had completely disappeared,* the girl not even bearing any marks to show where the warts originally were. Four of my children and myself have again paid a visit of thanksgiving to Our Lady of Vailankanni to-day for favours obtained through her intercession. Blessed and praised be the most Sacred Heart of Jesus and His Blessed Mother, our dear Lady of Vailankanni. —31st December 1911—M. L. Rodrigues, Chief Clerk,

Loco. Superintendent's Office, M. & S. M. Railway, Perambore.

21. "Having lost seven children (4 boys and 3 girls) soon after their birth, I made a vow to the Blessed Lady of Vailankanni that the next child I get, to spare it; and my promise was that I would *come for 15 years together with the child.* I am quite happy to say that after I made this promise I got a little girl, who is now three years of age, and still further I must thank the Blessed Virgin because she has also *blessed me with a son,* who is now 2 months' old. Thanks to the Blessed Mother for all her blessing.—MRS. P. HARRIS, Royapuram.

22. I was attacked by *malarial fever and asthma* from my infancy and I tried many doctors without success and also three of my children died successively. Finally, I made a vow to Our Blessed Lady of Vailankanni that I would visit her church and pay my vow if I am cured from the above-said diseases *and get a child.* My requests were heard favourably, therefore I fulfilled my promise to-day with cordial thanks.

(Mrs.) STELLA JULIE BEARDMORE,

21st February 1907. *Trichinopoly.*

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23. We have received many special favours and considerable aid in our troubles and trials of sickness from Our most generous Lady, and in all our troubles and sickness we promised to visit our dear Mother's shrine here, which

we have this day fulfilled, having come and thanked our Blessed Lady—22nd March 1911, E. V. Mayers, P. W. Inspector, M. and S. M. Ry., Ongole, Guntur Dist.

24. My child was unable to walk for about four years. After my vow he walked through the help of my Blessed Virgin Mary of Vailankanni. Although we belong to Protestant sect I have my full faith in my B. V. Mary.

27—8—1904. M. CORNELIUS,
Guard, S. M. Ry.

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25. Visited the Holy Shrine at Vailankanni which we might call the 'Lourdes of India' with my whole family consisting in all of 12 members, to fulfil the vows contracted for the miraculous cures effected by the Virgin Mother in my family. The cures are as follows:

(a) One of my daughters, by name Pushpa Ratna Mary, had an attack of fever continued with dysentry and her life was considered hopeless by the doctors, when we sought the special help of the 'Mother of Health' at Vailankanni and she recovered.

(b) In 1913 my wife Pathmavathi Ammal had an attack of fits and convulsions during her pregnancy in her 8th month and all hopes of her recovery were lost. The parish priest had also administered the Extreme Unction. At that stage we vowed to the B. V. M. at Vailankanni

that, if my wife recovered, the whole family will go to Vailankanni to pay homage for the favours received. She not only recovered but also the child that was dead in the womb came out miraculously without the use of any instrument.

(c) There were long-standing ulcers in the soles of my feet, and they were a source of much trouble to me. By faithful invocation to B. V. Mary, they have been cured.

25—5—1914. A. ARUMAINATHA PILLAI,
Overseer, Dindigul.

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26. I was suffering from Axitis due to cerosis of liver. Doctors declared that it was incurable, but after making a vow to O. B. Mother I am perfectly cured. The surgeon at the General Hospital said that it was a miraculous cure.

M. R. D'CRUZ,
Asst. at Messrs. Lyon & Lyon, Calcutta.

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27. We have come as pilgrims to Vailankanni to thank O. Lady for countless favours received and as suppliants for more favours. My wife wishes me to mention here that she recovered from an attack of cholera on 27th July 1901, after a vow made to O. L. of Vailankanni. I for one did not expect her to live through the

night, but at 1 a. m., she was declared out of danger and made a good recovery.

22—8—1915. L. D. SWAMIKANNU.

28, Four years ago, when I was employed in B. I. Singapore mail steamer *'S. S. Thista,'* I met happily in the steamer between Negapatam and Madras a Hindu woman-servant of a European lady. This woman, after learning that I had no issue for the last 13 years since my marriage, told me of the church at Vailankanni where Hindus, Mohammedans and Protestants were going and receiving favours, and advised me to do likewise. Accordingly I made a vow to go to the shrine if I were granted a child. O. B. Lady granted my request and a male child was born on 23—1—1912. Now we come directly here with that child from Salsette, Goa, to tender our thanks to Our Lady of Vailankanni.

14—1—1916. G. ANDRADE,

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29. A certain person having fallen grievously ill, I had recourse to Our Lady of Vailankanni. When all hopes were given up, I tied a little medal of Vailankanni around the neck of the sick person, and thanks to Our Good Mother, the patient began visibly to improve at once and in a short time was out of bed For so great a grace I come full of gratitude to thank by this means our compassionate Mother.

30. Some 49 years ago when I was a young fellow, I was dangerously ill and condemned therefore by the

physician to an assured death. Then my mother, putting all her confidence in Our Lady of Vailankanni, undertook a long journey and brought me to the illustrious shrine. Thanks to the Blessed Virgin Mary of Vailankanni I recovered there miraculously my health. Being very thankful to the good *'Arokia Mada,'* I used since that time to go over to Vailankanni every year during the feast. But I ceased to do it when I became an ecclesiastical student. Now, after a lapse of 40 years I get an opportunity of going in pilgrimage to the feast of Vailankanni.

FR. ANTOINE,
4—9—1916. *Asst. Vicar, Karikal.*

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31. My heartfelt thanks to our merciful Mother for having saved me from what had been declared by three distinguished surgeons as an incurable disease. My son promised Our Holy Mother that, if I was restored to perfect health, I would come myself to give thanks at her shrine. I have now fulfilled my vow and may the name of Her who has deigned to favonr me be ever praised and more loved by men.

MRS. H. W. ENRIGHT,
16—12—1916. *Vijaiyanagaram.*

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32. My heartfelt thanks and gratitude to Our Blessed Mother for having cured my two children (Nona

and Shiela) who were so seriously ill with enteric fever that the doctors did not expect them to live. After making a vow to our Blessed Lady to bring them to Vailankanni, I am glad to say they got alright and are quite well now and have come here with me to fulfil my vow.

MRS. S. P. JANSON,
Suramangalam, Salem.

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33. My husband was suffering from Asthma for many years and the doctors said it was incurable, but after my husband visited the shrine he has been completely cured of it. Also my son was suffering from fever, and the doctor feared it was enteric. I was so troubled that I promised to visit the shrine if the fever left him at once and the next day he was almost well and the fever left after a day or two.

MRS. E. DE SOUZA,
22—11—17. *Bolarum, Deccan.*

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34. I am sending a M. O. for Rs. 100—0—0. the amount being my thank-offering to the Holy Shrine of Mother of Vailankanni. I was suffering from typhoid fever and there was no hope of my ever living again in this world. But Our Mother heard our prayer.

R. JOSHUA,
17—12—1917. *Bukit Tengal, Penang.*

36. When my wife was undergoing a treatment for a baby which she was anxious for, she all of a sudden came in for goitre and it became so big that we were alarmed at it. Some friend had given her the miraculous oil of Vailankanni and she made a vow to Our Lady and the Sacred Heart for the cure and applied the oil to the part. As she finished her novena the swelling went down and she was quite cured.

B. A. D'SOUZA,

24—4—1918. *Calcutta.*

37. Some years back I heard of the great wonders performed and wishes granted to devout Christians in this shrine. I, though not of the Church of Rome, came here with my family and made a vow with particular request, and do write now to say that this request was fulfilled, and I have come now with my family again, and all of us have fulfilled our vow this day aud return our thanks to Our Blessed Mother of God, Our Christ and Saviour, whose wonders shall never be comprehensive to earthly and sinful man.

J. JEYSON,

1—5—1919. *Traffic Inspector, M. & S. M, Ry.,*

Donakonda.

31. I am a Protestant and not a Catholic. I have heard of the miracles wrought by the Blessed Mother of

Vailankanni. Hence I approach that Mother for a great favour.................. Iam not a married woman though I pass for such. There is none in this world to guard me, protect and shield me from danger. I have a father who ignores, nay, has disowned me. Mother I have no more. I am left all alone to eke out my existence. Fortunately I am employed as a nurse. Now I went you to recommend me to the Blessed Mother that I may settle down in life to a good man and lead a good life and also to embrace the true religion. I am simply surrounded by sins and temptations. Please pray for me and ask Our Blessed Mother to help me and have mercy on me." [This letter was written to the Vicar of the shrine on 10—7—1919 by an anxious soul. She says many more things which we do not here divulge. Her intentions were prayed for. A subsequent note from the distressed lady states that Our Blessed Mother granted her the favour she prayed for.] "I am sending you a M. O. for Rs. 35/—a thank-offering to Our Blessed Mother. She had answered my prayers. I got married to a nice chap. Please do not fail to pray for us so that we may both be quite happy."

39. On the occasion of the feast of Our Lady in September 1919, a group of pilgrims hailed from Ajmere. They were all Hindus and could talk only the Hindi language. Through an interpreter the present writer learnt of their motive for their pilgrimage. Many of them had received significant favours at the hands of Our Lady of Vailankanni. One woman in particular was miraculously saved from a great physical deformity. It

appears her face was distorted after her confinement. She had recourse to European and Indian medicine, but to no purpose. She offered prayers and sacrifices to her gods and goddesses. She was not better. It was then that she was advised to have recourse to Our Lady of Vailankanni. Soon after she sought the intercession of Our Blessed Lady she was completely cured.

40. An Indian Catholic of Madras was in the shrine September 1919, to tender his heartfelt thanks to Our Blessed Lady of Vailankanni. During the last Influenza epidemic he was also a victim with double pneumonia. He was hovering between life and death, Medicines failed. The doctors gave him up. He then implored Our Blessed Lady. Soon visible signs of recovery appeared and finally he rallied through. He was so much impressed by this extraordinary favour that he wished the present writer (a priest) to publish the fact from the pulpit.

41. While one of our priests was travelling from Madras to Negapatam, he had in the railway compartment for his companion an Anglo-Indian young man going to Karikal. He had seen active service during the Great War (1914 - 1918) in France and only lately he had returned. When abroad his people from India wrote to him a number of letters. He missed all but one. The one that reached him contained a picture of Our Lady of Vailankanni. He had complained often to his people of their remissness in not writing to him. However, it was not their mistake. They then with full

confidence despatched a letter with a picture of O. L. of Vailankanni, that it might go without being missed. Their confidence was rewarded.

On 30th October 1929, I came to Vailankanni to fulfill a vow made two years ago when operated on twice in one month for *peritonitis and given only 12 hours to live* and by the leading doctors of Bombay. By the powerful intercession of our Lady of Health of Vailankanni, I am now in perfect health and have had no more trouble with my stomach.

A. Major, 30th October 1929.

For over a year, I was suffering from stomach trouble and no doctor could defiuitely diagnose my case. At last one doctor stated that *I had a tumour in my stomach* and that I must be operated on immediately, I made a vow to visit the shrine of Our Lady of Health at Vailankanni. She heard my prayers and miraculously removed all trouble, I am now in health, thanks to our dear Lady of Health.

Mrs. C. Lincoln, 19th November 1929.

Our servant suffering from *fetoirb* was miraculously cured by our Lady of Health, Vailankanni, when all medical aid and remedies proved a failure. We have brought him now to fnlfiil our vow and to thank Our Lady for all her blessings on us. The cure was obtained by the applications of *Her Holy Oil.*

P. de Lemos Pallavaram, 23rd November 1929.

My grand child Olive has *not been speaking* from her childhood *for over two years*, not even "mummy" or "daddy." As I have great faith in the Blessed Lady here I made a vow that I would take the child to Her Shrine. The child started walking within three months or so and now over a year. I treated her with no medicine so I brought the baby to fulfill my vow.

Alfredy Trousse ; 18th January 1930.

I was on a holiday during January 1928 at Bangalore and my little daughter was very ill, from *enteric fever*. Medical aid was given her. She was getting worse and on the 13th of the same month, the doctors informed me that *that there was no hope of her recovering.* I then took her to the Victoria Hospital, Bangalore and I also made a promise to our Lady of Vailankanni that if my little girl recovered, *I would baptize her a Roman Catholic* and would bring her to our Lady's Church in Vailankanni. I am very pleased to say that the same night I made the promise there was a change in the child and within a short time, the child recovered. I and my husband have now fulfilled our promise and will always be grateful to our Lady Vailankanni

Mrs. M. Jones, 17th July 1930.

I was in great difficulties. By invoking our Mother of Health I soon found I was helped on miracvlously and came back to my parents safely.

Our Lady of Health pray for us.

J. Costa, 1931.

By the eyil work of my enemy who did some devilish things to me *I became blind and sick.* After I prayed to our Lady of Vailankanni I have my sight now. I have come here to thank my good Mother.

Davi.d Madras, 1—9—.31

I wish to thank Our Lady of Velankanni for giving me much relief from a chronic intestinal complaint with which I was ailing for nearly three years—my health has improved a great deal since returning from the pilgrimage to Velankanni..............As a token of my gratitude I sent an M. O. for a Mass to be said at Our Lady's altar for the Holy Souls in purgatory in need of urgent help, the balance for candles to be lit during mass and for alms to be given to the poor who wait at the door of the church. Commending myself to your kind prayers.

4-11-1932. (Sd.) *C. P. Fernandes, Vepery, Madras.*

1 the undersigned was *suffering from appendicitis for four years.* On medical advice I *was to be operated* last year, June 17th. 1928. But fearing the trouble, I had recourse to Our Lady of Velankanni. With faith, I dipped the medal of Our Lady of Velankanni in the water which I took with a vow to go on a pilgrimage to Velankanni. Lo and behold! ever since no pain in the effected part—my other troubles consequent on that, very constant pain, loss of appetite, fever etc. all disappeared in a month's time. I was suffering from consti-

pation too. That also disappeared. Now I have come with my family to give thanks to the Heavenly mother.

A. Francis,

Assistant Foreman, Bombay Company, Tnticorin.

நான் "Asthama" வில் அதிக கஷ்டப்பட்டுக்கொண்டிருந்தேன். சுவாமியார்கூட வந்து அவஸ்தை கொடுத்துவிட்டார். பிறகு நான் தேவதாயாருடைய ஆலயத்திற்கு மூன்று வருஷம் பொருத்து வருவதாய் வேண்டிக்கொண்டேன். இப்பொழுது தேவதாயாரின் கிருபையால் எனக்கு பூரண சவுக்கியம். நான் என்னுடைய பொருத்தனையை இவ்வருஷம் இங்கு வந்து செலுத்திவிட்டேன்.

K. Stevens, Mandalay.

என்னுடைய மகன் ஏசுதாஸ் மூன்று வருஷத்திற்கு முன் நாக்கு உள்ளுக்கு விழுந்துவிட்டது. அதற்காக மாதாவுக்கு வேண்டிக்கொண்டேன். அப்படியே சௌக்கியமாகிவிட்டது. இந்த வருஷம் வந்து நான் வேண்டிக்கொண்டபிரகாரம் பொருத்தனை செலுத்திவிட்டேன்.

Maria Viayana, Mandalay, Burma.

My daughter was suffering from severe fever for 9 days for which I prayed to our Lady of Velankanni. The patient who could not even open her eyes for 3 days was instantaneously cured by her prayers.

I had stomach pain for a year. The moment I prayed to our Lady of Velankanni I was miraculously cured. I have come here with my family to offer my grateful thanks.

Alexander Leo, Dongergarh, B. N. Ry.

A friend of mine sent me a medal a booklet containing prayers to Our Lady of Good Health of Velankanni. They came quite opportunely, for I had been in poor health during quite a long time. As soon as I received the collection of Velankanni prayers, I began a novena to Our Lady, and I am glad to say that on the seventh day of the novena I felt much better and the stomach complaints vanished two days later. I had tried all sorts of medicines, but none of them did me any good. I was troubled with *diarrhoea* ever since February last, making *full twelve months* up to date, but no remedy could I find till I had recourse to the physician who knows no failure, Our Lady of Health, Velankanni. In gratitude, I propose to get a good supply of leaflets, pictures and medals, and give them to my friends and relations, so that Our Lady may be better known.

A. de. S., Bangalore, 14—2—1933.

Erratum.

Page 8 line 8 read *cast anchor* instead of weighed anchor.

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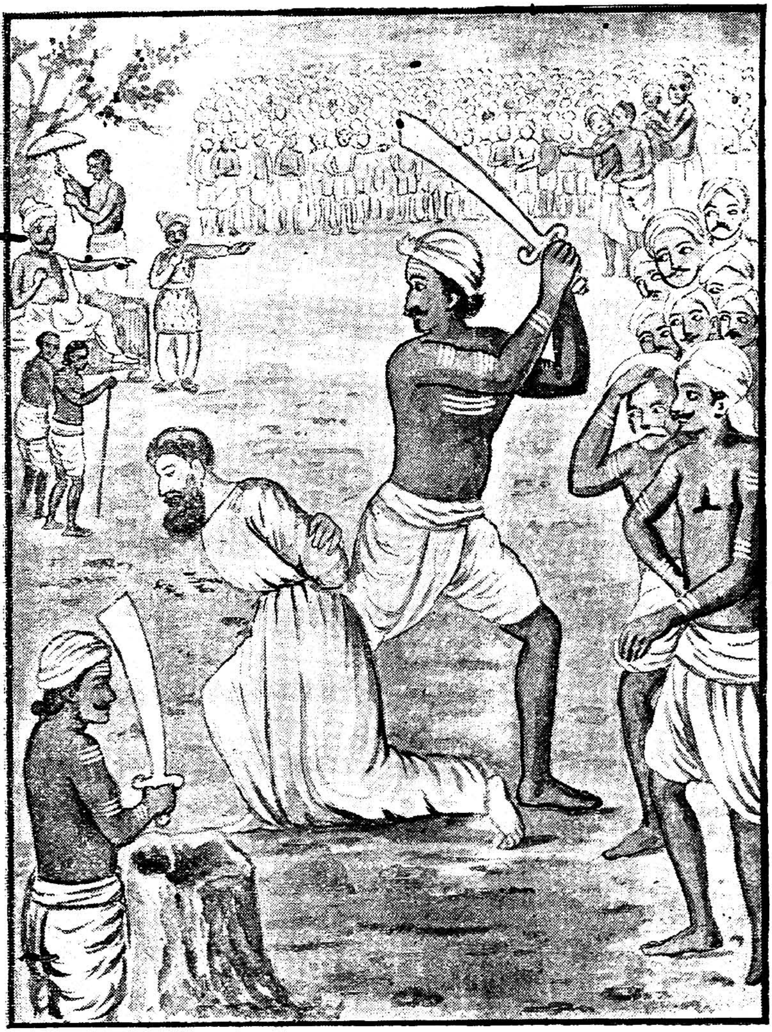

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